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Hull and East Riding Abstraction Licensing Strategy

February 2013

A licensing strategy to manage water resources sustainably

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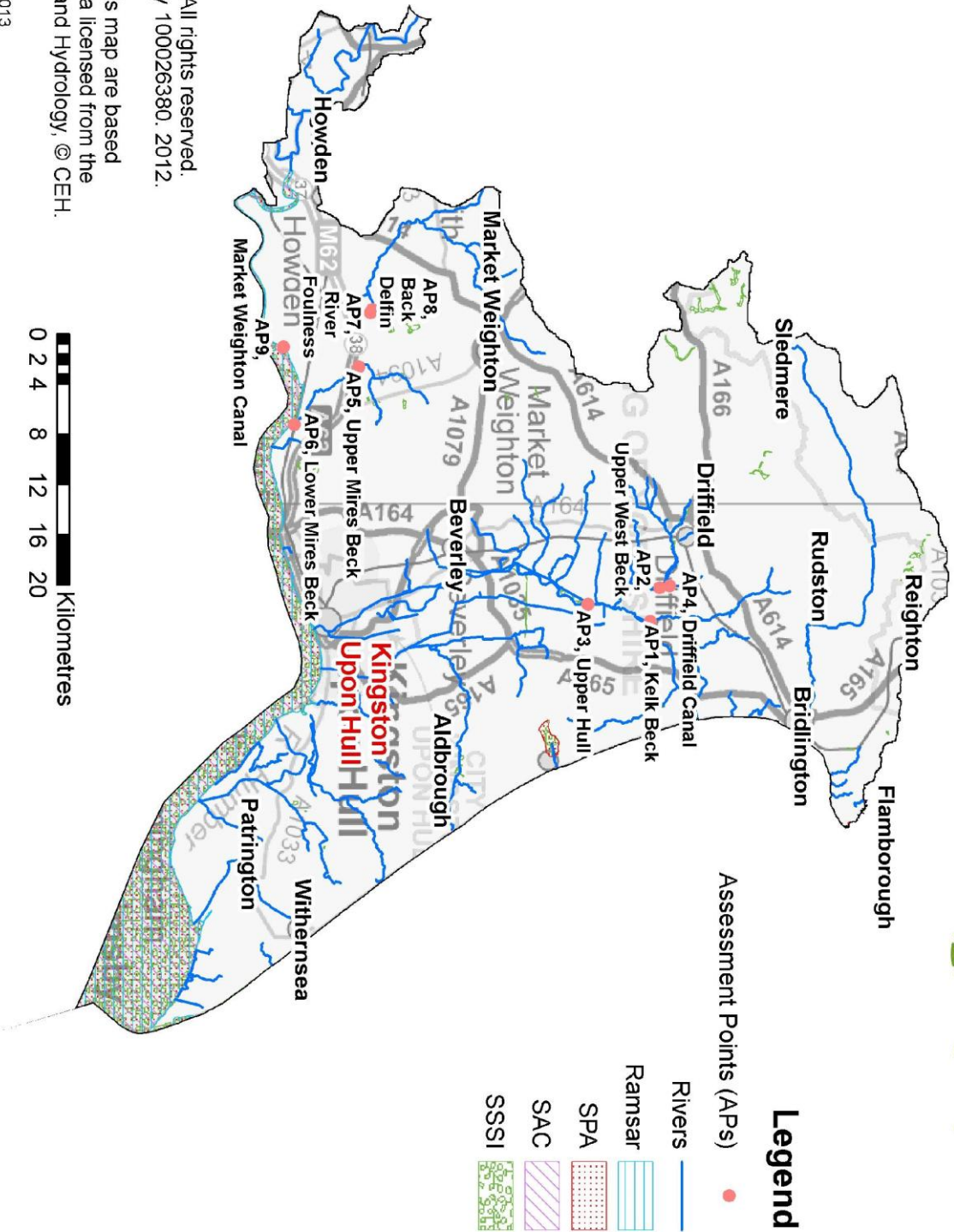
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Hull and East Riding CAMS Area



Legend

- Assessment Points (APs) ●
- Rivers —
- Ramsar —
- SPA —
- SAC —
- SSSI —

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Map 1 Hull and East Riding Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) area

Foreword

Water is the most essential of our natural resources, and it is our job to ensure that we manage and use it effectively and sustainably. The latest population growth and climate change predictions show that pressure on water resources is likely to increase in the future. In light of this, we have to ensure that we continue to maintain and improve sustainable abstraction and balance the needs of society, the economy and the environment.

This licensing strategy sets out how we will manage water resources in the Hull and East Riding catchment and provides you with information on how we will manage existing abstraction licences and water availability for further abstraction.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Scott', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Scott Yorkshire Area Manager

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1. About the Licensing Strategy

This **Licensing Strategy** sets out how water resources are managed in the Hull and East Riding area. It provides information about where water is available for further abstraction and an indication of how reliable a new abstraction licence may be.

This strategy was produced in February 2013 and it supersedes the strategy issued in 2006.

How CAMS contributes to achieving environmental objectives under the Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Water Framework Directive's main objectives are to protect and enhance the water environment and ensure the sustainable use of water resources for economic and social development.

Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) set out how we will manage the water resources of a catchment and contribute to implementing the WFD.

CAMS contribute to the WFD by:

- providing a water resource assessment of rivers, lakes, reservoirs, estuaries and groundwater referred to as water bodies under the WFD;
- identifying water bodies that fail flow conditions expected to support good ecological status;
- preventing deterioration of water body status due to new abstractions;
- providing results which inform River Basin Management Plans ([RBMPs](#)).

When is an abstraction licence required?

You need a licence from us if you want to abstract more than 20 cubic meters (m³) (4,400 gallons) of water per day from a:

- river or stream
- reservoir, lake or pond
- canal
- spring or
- an underground source

Whether or not a licence is granted depends on the amount of water available after the needs of the environment and existing abstractors are met and whether the justification for the abstraction is reasonable.

If you want to apply for an abstraction licence or make changes to a licence that you already have then, please contact us:

- by telephone on 03708 506 506
- by email at enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
- or visit our website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk.

Sustainable abstraction

This licensing strategy has been produced using evidence and information gathered during the CAMS process. Through this process we consider the impact of abstraction at all flows. This helps to manage future abstraction more sustainably.

We now assess water resources at a sub-catchment level called water bodies. This means that we can provide more detailed information on the availability of water resources in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area compared to the scale used in the previous strategy.

Within this strategy we also outline where we may need to reduce current rates of abstraction and our approach on time limiting licences.

The background, aims and principles of CAMS, the over arching principles we use when managing abstraction licences and links with other initiatives are detailed in our document: [Managing Water Abstraction](#). You should read Managing Water Abstraction when reading this catchment specific licensing strategy.

2. Hull and East Riding CAMS area

[Map 1](#) shows the Hull and East Riding catchment.

The Hull and East Riding CAMS covers an area of approximately 2170km², stretching from Bridlington in the north to Holderness in the south and from Market Weighton in the west to Withernsea in the east. The CAMS area includes the surface water catchments of a number of large, significant watercourses. The River Hull flows for 32km from Driffield to the Humber, draining waterways including the Driffield Canal and Frodingham Beck in the north, Beverley Beck and the Leven Canal in the south, and the River Foulness, Market Weighton Canal and Mires Beck to the west. The Gypsy Race drains the northern part of the CAMS area into the North Sea at Bridlington.

The Yorkshire Wolds curve in a crescent shape stretching from the chalk cliffs at Flamborough to the Humber Estuary at Hessle. They form a characteristic region of higher land, rising to 245m above sea level. This area is a gently rolling plateau crossed by a complicated system of steep and deep valleys. In contrast the Holderness area is a wide low-lying coastal plain which lies to the east and south of Beverley; at its southernmost tip is the unique Spurn Point. The coastline is eroding at an average of 7.5cm per year.

Most of the region is sparsely populated with an average of one person to every acre in the area. Urban settlements in the CAMS area include the city of Kingston-Upon-Hull, the seaside resorts of Bridlington, Hornsea and Withernsea, the market towns of Driffield and Market Weighton and the historic town of Beverley. Land use in the East Riding area is primarily arable farming of cereal crops, but pig and poultry farming are also present in the area. Tourism is important to the region, with seaside resorts and market towns attracting visitors. There is a large concentration of industrial activity around Hull, with large fishing centres in Hull and Bridlington.

The geology of the Hull and East Riding area is made up of older Triassic (c.248 million years ago) and Jurassic (c.199 million years ago) marine clays, limestones and sandstones to the west, and younger Cretaceous (c.144 million years ago) rocks to the east. Cretaceous chalk forms the prominent ridge of the Yorkshire Wolds and provides a primary aquifer, with uses ranging from public water supply and agriculture to industry. The land surface loses altitude towards the east until the chalk becomes confined under thick clay deposits. Groundwater within the outcrop area is of high quality and can be used for many purposes without treatment. Once confined beneath the clay, the groundwater rapidly becomes mineralised and is less heavily abstracted because it is unfit for many uses.

There is little variation in rainfall across the CAMS area, which receives an average of 660mm of rainfall each year. Annual totals are however, greater on the higher ground with a maximum of almost 800mm per year. The effective rainfall, which excludes evaporation and interception by vegetation, supports the river and chalk aquifer as well as other water uses. The rainfall response of the rivers reduces from northwest to southeast and corresponds to the reduction in gradient from the Wolds to the flat area of Holderness. Rivers in the area respond quickly due to surface water runoff, yet are also largely driven by chalk groundwater levels which can increase flows four to eight weeks after prolonged rainfall.

The major uses for abstracted water are power generation, agriculture, public water supply and industry. Around one fifth of the water abstracted in this area comes from groundwater. In the area there are a number of important canal networks that were built to transport industrial goods to national and international markets. Use of waterways for commercial navigation in the region has significantly decreased but the area has now become popular for pleasure boating. Angling is enjoyed throughout the Hull and East Riding catchment, bringing economic benefits to the area. Birdwatching is also very popular in the area with large wildlife reserves and SSSIs scattered around the region.

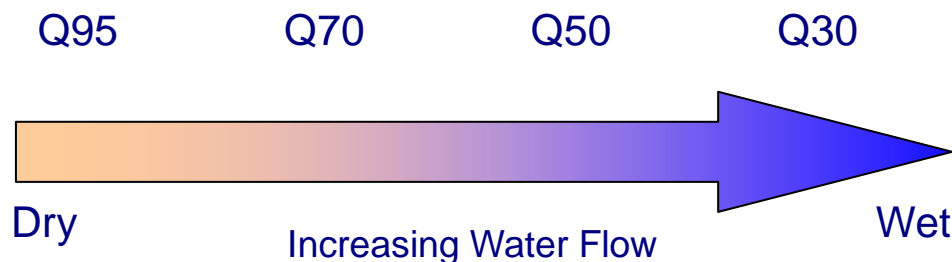
3. Water resource availability of the Hull and East Riding area

3.1 Resource assessment

Resource assessment is at the heart of abstraction management. To manage water effectively we need to understand how much is available and where it is available, after considering the needs of the environment. We have a monitoring network to measure river flows and groundwater levels. We use this data along with our knowledge of human influences and environmental needs to establish a baseline of water availability for each water body that builds into a picture for the catchment. The main components of this assessment that help us to understand the availability of water resources are:

- a resource allocation for the environment defined as a proportion of natural flow, known as the Environmental Flow Indicator (EFI);
- the Fully Licensed (FL) scenario - the situation if all abstraction licences were being used to full capacity;
- the Recent Actual (RA) scenario – the amount of water which has actually been abstracted on average over the previous six years.

River flows change naturally throughout the year, so we want to protect flow variability in our rivers from low to high flow conditions. We use flow statistics to help to do this. Flow statistics are expressed as the percentage of time that flow is exceeded. Resource availability is calculated at four different flows, Q95 (lowest), Q70, Q50 and Q30 (highest). Low flows (Q95) reflect very dry conditions and high flows (Q30) reflect very wet conditions.



This information gives a realistic picture of what the current resource availability is within a given water body. Water bodies are sub-catchment surface water units or groundwater units on which we carry out assessments and map results.

[Map 2](#) shows the water resource availability for the Hull and East Riding CAMS area at the four different flow values.

3.2 Resource availability

3.2.1 Surface water

If you want to abstract water, you need to know what water resources are available within a catchment and where abstraction for consumptive purposes is allowed. To show this we have developed a classification system which indicates:

- the relative balance between the environmental requirements for water and how much is licensed for abstraction;
- whether water is available for further abstraction;
- areas where abstraction may need to be reduced.

The availability of water for abstraction is determined by the relationship between the fully licensed and recent actual flows in relation to the EFI. The results mapped onto these water bodies are

represented by different water resource availability colours showing the availability of water resource for further abstraction. The water resource availability colours are explained in Table 1. In addition to these water resource availability colours we've classified some surface water bodies as 'high hydrological status' which are coloured blue on the maps. In these water bodies very little actual abstraction occurs and they show virtually undisturbed, or close to natural, flow conditions.

Another category of water body are Heavily Modified Water Bodies (HMWB). These can be classified for many reasons but for water resources they are classified if they contain a lake and/or reservoir that influences the downstream flow regime of the river. The downstream 'flow modified' water bodies are also classified as heavily modified.

We'll add any conditions necessary to protect flows to a new licence during the licence determination procedure. We will base licence conditions on the water resource availability at different flows (high to low). Table 1 lists the implications for licensing for each water resource availability colour.

In cases where there is a flow deficit ([RA](#) is below the EFI) or risk of a flow deficit ([FL](#) below the EFI), there may be water available for abstraction at higher flows. This means that water may be scarce at low flows, but may be available to abstract at medium or high flows. A licence may still be granted but with conditions which protect the low flows. This usually takes the form of a Hands-Off Flow (HOF) condition on a licence which requires abstraction to stop when the river flow falls below a certain amount. A river may also be heavily supported by flows from a reservoir and may have unnaturally high 'low' flows which means that the river environment is most vulnerable at medium flows.

Water resource availability colour	Implication for licensing
High hydrological regime	There is more water than required to meet the needs of the environment. However, due to the need to maintain the near pristine nature of the water body, further abstraction is severely restricted.
Water available for licensing	There is more water than required to meet the needs of the environment. New licences can be considered depending on local and downstream impacts.
Restricted water available for licensing	Fully Licensed flows fall below the EFIs. If all licensed water is abstracted there will not be enough water left for the needs of the environment. No water is available for further licensing at low flows. Water will be available at higher flows with appropriate restrictions It may also be appropriate to investigate the possibilities for reducing fully licensed risks. Water may be available if you can 'buy' (known as licence trading) the entitlement to abstract water from an existing licence holder.
Water not available for licensing	Recent actual flows are below the EFI. This scenario highlights water bodies where flows are below the indicative flow requirement to help support Good Ecological Status (as required by the Water Framework Directive. Note: we are currently investigating water bodies that are not supporting GES/GEP). Water may be available for further licensing at high flows with appropriate restrictions. Water may be available if you can buy (known as licence trading) the amount equivalent to recently abstracted from an existing licence holder.
HMWBs (and /or discharge rich water bodies)	These water bodies have a modified flow that is influenced by reservoir compensation releases or they have flows that are augmented. These are often known as 'regulated rivers'. They may be managed through an operating agreement, often held by a water company. The availability of water is dependent on these operating agreements. More detail if applicable can be found in section 4.2.1 Surface Water . There may be water available for abstraction in discharge rich catchments, you need to contact the Environment Agency to find out more.

Table 1 Implications of surface water resource availability colours

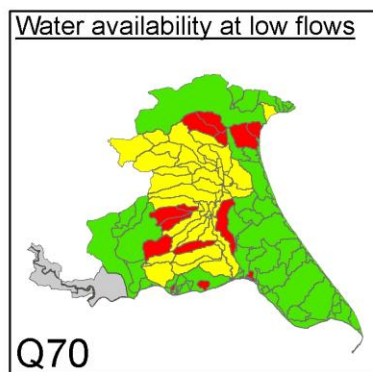
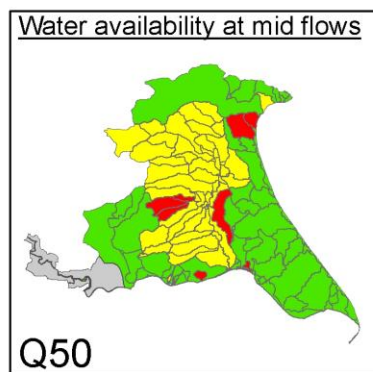
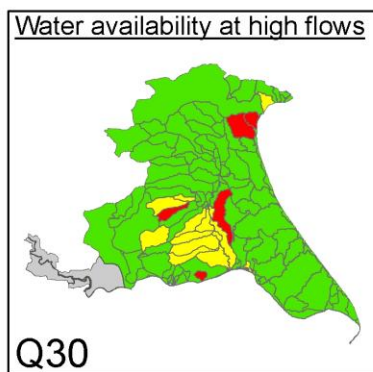
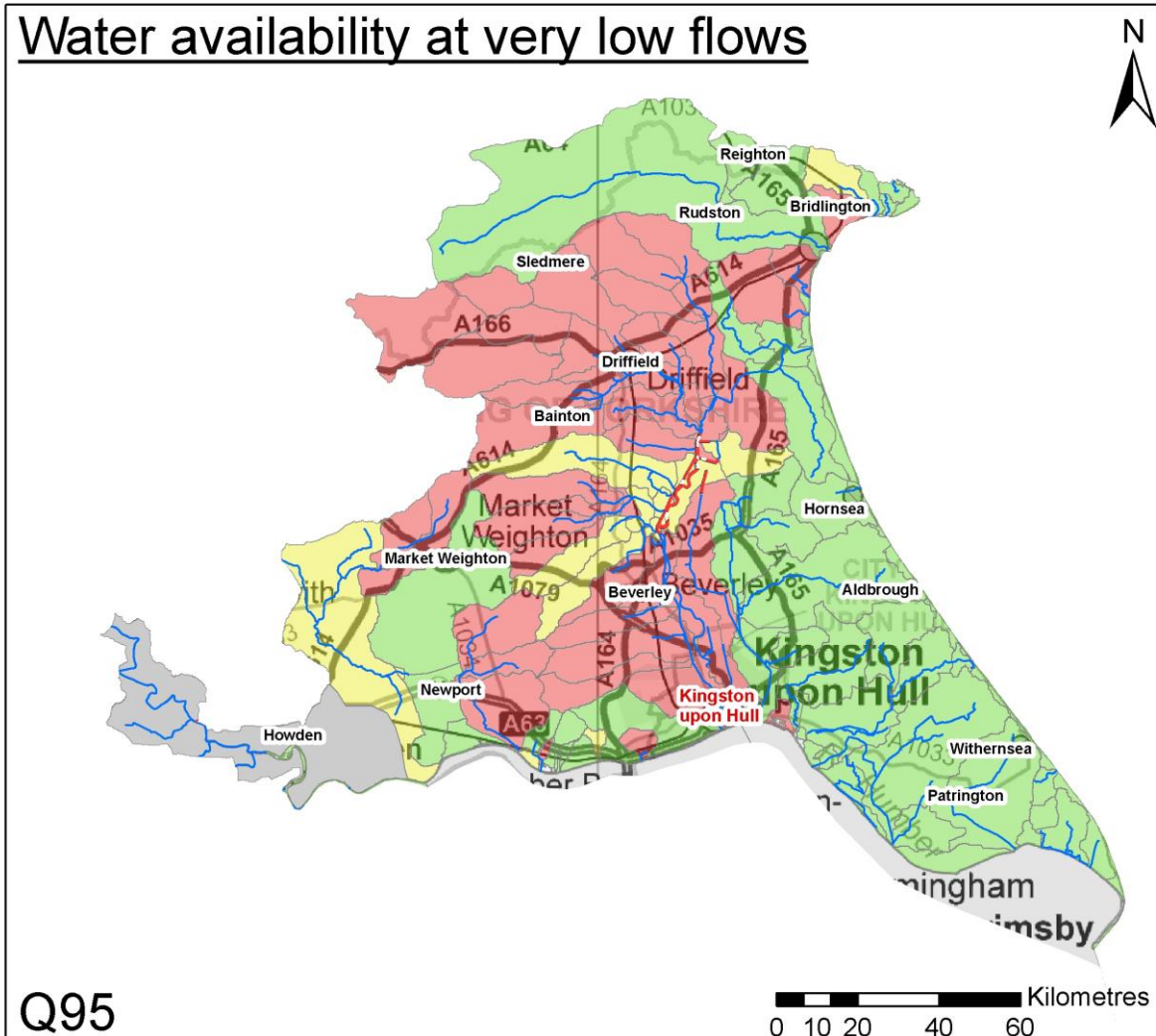
3.2.2 Groundwater

Groundwater availability is guided by the surface water resource availability colours unless we have better information on principle aquifers or are aware of local issues we need to protect. Water availability is different for groundwater and surface water in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area. Please refer to [section 4.2.2](#) for further information.

GWMU resource availability colour	Implication for licensing
Water available for licensing	Groundwater unit balance shows groundwater available for licensing. New licences can be considered depending on impacts on other abstractors and on surface water.
Restricted water available for licensing	<p>Groundwater unit balance shows more water is licensed than the amount available, but that recent actual abstractions are lower than the amount available OR that abstraction may cause local impacts likely to occur on water dependent habitats, groundwater levels or cause intrusions.</p> <p>In restricted groundwater units licences will be issued on a case by case basis. Conditions may be applied to licences that link the groundwater abstraction to surface water flows and restrictions. Surface water availability may override groundwater availability. In other units there may be restrictions in specific areas e.g. in relation to saline intrusion.</p> <p>It may be appropriate to investigate the possibilities for reducing fully licensed risks. Water may also be available if you can 'buy' (known as licence trading) the entitlement to abstract water from an existing licence holder.</p>
Water not available for licensing	<p>Groundwater unit balance shows more water has been abstracted based on recent amounts than the amount available.</p> <p>No further consumptive licences will be granted.</p>

Table 2 Implications of groundwater resource availability colours

Map 2 Hull and East Riding CAMS
Resource Availability Colours



Legend

- Heavily Modified and Artificial Rivers
- Hull & East Riding Rivers
- Heavily Modified and Artificial Lakes
- Hull & East Riding CAMS Water Bodies
- Not assessed (tidal area)
- Water Available
- Limited Water Available
- No Water Available

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Map 2 Water resource availability colours for the Hull and East Riding CAMS

3.2.3 About Map 2 Hull and East Riding CAMS Resource Availability Colours

Map 2 shows the water resource availability for the Hull and East Riding CAMS area at the four different flow values. Because flows in water bodies vary over time we have tried to show how water resource availability also varies. Map 2 shows this variability and how we are likely to apply restrictions, such as HOFs, to licences.

The largest map, Q95, shows where water is available at very low flows, for instance during dry periods. This represents water resource availability for 5% of the time – most of the time there is more water available than this. Q95 is when there is the least water available for consumptive use and shows where restrictions on licences come into force. Red coloured areas are those where we need licence-holders to stop abstracting at very low flows in order to protect the natural environment and other abstractors further downstream.

Gradually as the flows increase towards Q30, more water is available and can be licensed without risking ecological damage. The resource availability of water at Q30 shows what the situation is for about 30% of the time at high flows, such as when there has been a lot of rainfall. Most of the time there is less water available than this. Certain licences only allow abstraction at high flows, so in some areas there may actually be less water available when flows are high.

3.3 Resource reliability

If you want to apply for a licence, it is worth considering that in some areas a new, consumptive abstraction may not be 100% reliable. Reliability information is based on CAMS resource availability colours and is a way of presenting the reliability of new abstractions at all flows.

The availability of water for abstraction within a river varies greatly from high to low flows. By assessing the quantity of water available at different flows it is possible to see when there is a surplus or deficit of water and the associated reliability of an abstraction. This is an indication only; actual reliability of a licence will be discussed on application.

Table 3 shows the resource availability colour associated with the percentage reliability of consumptive abstraction. Map 3 gives an indication of the resource reliability in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area, expressed as percentage of time.

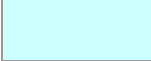
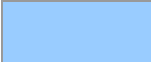
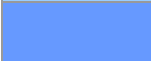


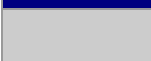
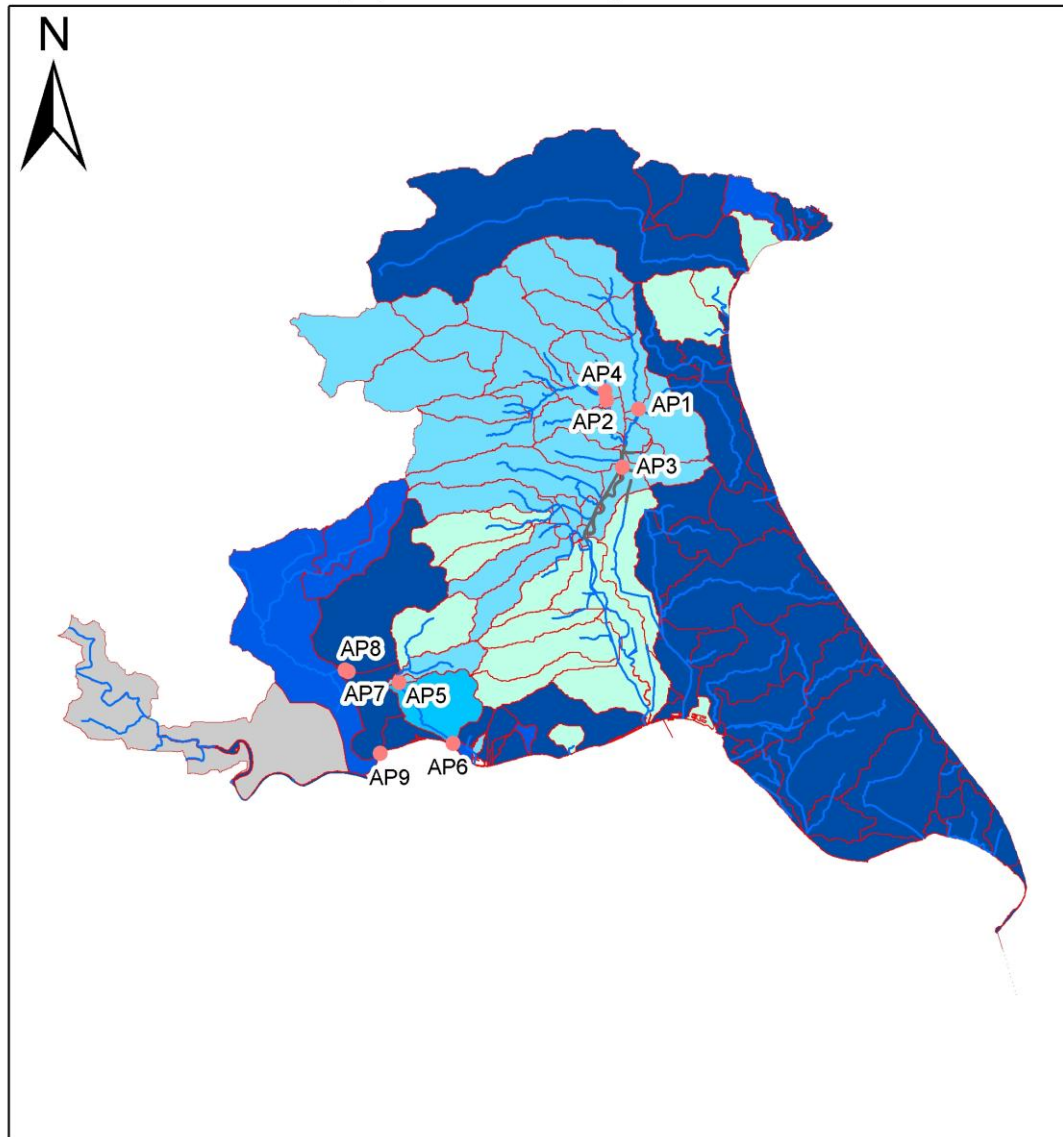
Resource	Percentage of the time additional consumptive resource may be available
	Consumptive abstraction available less than 30% of the time.
	Consumptive abstraction available at least 30% of the time.
	Consumptive abstraction available at least 50% of the time.
	Consumptive abstraction available at least 70% of the time.
	Consumptive abstraction available at least 95% of the time.
	Not assessed

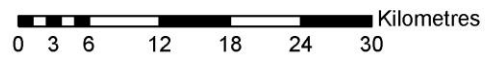
Table 3 Percentage reliability of consumptive abstraction

Map 3 Hull and East Riding CAMS Resource Reliability (% of the time)



Legend

- Hull & East Riding CAMS APs
- Heavily Modified and Artificial Rivers
- Hull & East Riding Rivers
- Heavily Modified and Artificial Lakes
- Hull & East Riding CAMS Water Bodies
- Water Resources not assessed (tidal area)
- Water Resources available less than 30%
- Water Resources available at least 30%
- Water Resources available at least 50%
- Water Resources available at least 70%
- Water Resources available at least 95%



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Map 3 Water resource reliability expressed as percentage of time available

4. How we manage abstractions in the Hull and East Riding area

4.1 Principles

The document [Managing Water Abstraction](#) outlines the over-arching principles that we follow in managing our water resources. How we apply these principles in the Hull and East Riding area is outlined in this section. If you want to abstract water it outlines where water is available for further abstraction and the principles we follow in assessing your application for a licence.

Abstraction licence application process

Anyone wanting to take more than 20m³/day (4,400 gallons) from a 'source of supply' (river, stream, lake, well, groundwater, etc.) must have an abstraction licence. The application process for abstraction is similar to the planning process in that we may require the application to be advertised and may require supporting environmental information. When considering the application we check that the quantities applied for and the purpose of the abstraction are reasonable, that there is sufficient water available to support it and that the potential impacts on the environment and other water users are acceptable. Depending on the outcome of our investigations we will issue a licence either as applied for, or with conditions that restrict the abstraction to protect the environment or other users. In certain cases we may have to refuse the application. Any applicant who is not happy with our determination (decision) has the right to appeal against it.

Each application is determined on its own merits

Whilst this document may say that water is available for further abstraction, this does not guarantee that all applications will be successful. We'll determine each application upon its own merits and any local impacts.

A licence does not guarantee that water is available

It's important to understand that when we issue a licence we do not guarantee the supply of water. We have to protect the environment and rights of other abstractors. To do this we may add constraints to licences. Licence holders need to understand the implications of this as it affects the reliability of supply. For example, in drier years it's more likely that conditions will come into effect and abstraction is more likely to be stopped.

Abstractions are managed to protect the environment

No ecological deterioration

We assess the impact of new applications for water to make sure that the resultant river flows:

- will maintain a good ecology or if the ecology is not good, will not deteriorate the ecology of our rivers further;
- will maintain the near pristine condition of high hydrological regime water bodies.

We'll also take action if necessary to limit the increase in current abstraction, if we think this will lead to deterioration of the ecology or the near pristine condition of our high hydrological regime water bodies.

These principles apply to the water body in which the abstraction is located and also to all downstream water bodies that may be affected by any reduction in abstraction related flow. Doing this means that we will maintain the water body status as reported in the River Basin Management Plans (2009) and ensure compliance with the European Union Water Framework Directive.

Water efficiency and demand management

We need to make the best use of our existing water resources. Adopting water efficiency and demand management measures can help us achieve this goal. Water efficiency is one of the tests that will need to be satisfied before we grant a new licence or renew a time limited licence. We will promote the wise and efficient use of water and actions to limit demand (and reduce leakage) to curb the growth in abstraction and limit the impact on flows and any consequent impact on the ecology. For further details on our general approach to licensing please see the document [Managing Water Abstraction](#).

Impoundments

Applications for impoundments will be dealt with on a case by case basis. An impoundment is a dam, weir or other construction in an inland waterway that obstructs or impedes flow and/or raises water levels.

Hydropower

Water abstraction for hydropower schemes is non-consumptive, with all water used returned to the watercourse. HOF conditions and maximum abstraction volumes are determined in line with the Environment Agency's Hydropower Good Practice Guidelines and based on the assessment of environmental risk for each scheme. For further information please refer to our [website](#).

4.2 Abstraction restrictions

When issuing a licence we have to protect the environment and rights of other abstractors. To do this we may add conditions to licences.

Time limited licences

In recognition of changing pressures on water resources all new licences and variations (other than downward variations or minor variations having no environmental impact) will have a time limit imposed. This allows for the periodic review and changes to abstraction licences where circumstances have changed since the licence was granted.

All new licences within a CAMS area have a **common end date** (CED) so they can be reviewed at the same time. When an application is made within six years of the CED, we will generally apply the subsequent CED to any licence granted. This is to avoid issuing shorter and shorter duration licences as the CED approaches. This means that the initial CED on a licence may be between six and 18 years duration. On replacement the normal duration will then usually be 12 years.

However, where we are uncertain about the long term impacts of an abstraction we will grant a short term licence during which time potential impacts are monitored.

23% of the licences in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area are time-limited. CEDs occur every twelve years. The next CED for the Hull and East Riding CAMS area is 31 March 2013 and the subsequent one is 31 March 2025.

Additional information about the replacement of time limited licences is available in [Managing Water Abstraction](#).

Hands-Off Flow conditions

To protect the environment we may issue a licence with a condition referred to as a 'Hands-Off Flow' (HOF). This specifies that if the flow in the river drops below that which is required to protect the environment abstraction must stop, hence 'Hands-Off Flow'.

4.2.1 Surface water

We assess surface water flows at Assessment Points (APs) which are significant points on the river, often where two major rivers join or at a gauging station. Where flows fall below the EFI, new abstractions may be subject to HOFs.

Table 4 gives an indication of how much water is available for further abstraction and the associated restrictions that we may apply to new and varied abstraction licences from the main river. Tributaries to the main river may be subject to different restrictions and quantities.

Each HOF is linked to an AP and is dependent on the resource availability at that AP. In some cases additional restrictions may apply to licences where there is a more critical resource availability downstream to protect the ecological requirements of the river. This is detailed in the last column of Table 4 if applicable.

All abstraction licence applications are subject to an assessment to take account of any local and downstream issues and may be subject to further restrictions.

Reading from top to bottom in Table 4 are the APs in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area. Reading across the columns you can see the potential HOF that may be applied to a licence, the number of days water may be available under this restriction and the approximate volume of water in megalitres per day (Ml/d) that may be available. In cases where there is water available at all flows we will apply a Minimum Residual Flow (MRF) to protect very low flows.

Within the Hull and East Riding CAMS area AP4 and AP7 contain a lot of discharges. Table 4 shows where an assessment point incorporates a lot of discharges into its resource assessment (i.e. it is discharge rich). It is important to note that although there may appear to be water available the Environment Agency can only licence discharge water for use under specific conditions. The Environment Agency has no control over the continued operation of these existing users. This means that the input of water is classed as unreliable; we will therefore licence discharge water on a case by case basis.

AP	Name	Water Resource Availability Colour at Q95	HOF Restriction (Ml/d)	Number of days per annum abstraction may be available	Approximate volume available at restriction (Ml/d)	Is there a gauging station at this AP?	Additional restrictions AP name and restriction
1	Kelk Beck	Restricted water available for licensing	37.8	211	7.5	Foston Mill	This HOF is set to protect flows at critical AP3 downstream
2	Upper West Beck	Water available for licensing	116.2	211	35.1	Snakeholme Lock	This HOF is set to protect flows at critical AP3 downstream
3	Upper Hull	Water not available for licensing	231.0 HOF3	211	16.8	No	Critical AP
4	Driffield Canal	Water available for licensing	Discharge rich AP - licences to be issued on a case by case basis			Snakeholme Lock	Discharge Rich Any HOF will be set to protect flows at critical AP3 downstream
5	Upper Mires Beck	Restricted water available for licensing	6.5 HOF2	292	0.6	North Cave	Critical AP
6	Lower Mires Beck	Water not available for licensing	11.1 HOF2	292	1.3	No (measured at North Cave)	Critical AP
7	River Foulness	Water available for licensing	Discharge rich AP - licences to be issued on a case by case basis			Holme House Farm	Discharge Rich Any HOF will be set to protect flows at critical AP9 downstream
8	Back Delfin	Restricted water available for licensing	2.3 HOF1	336	1.5	Wholesale Grange	Critical AP
9	Market Weighton Canal	Water available for licensing	3.8 MRF	361	1.6	No	Critical AP

Table 4 HOFs/MRFs for the assessment points of the Hull and East Riding CAMS

Assessment Point descriptions

The information below for each AP gives an indication of whether licences will be renewed or granted.

Water available for licensing

The following APs have water available for licensing:

- **AP2 Upper West Beck**
- **AP9 Market Weighton Canal**

Using Table 4 and AP9 as an example, the following will apply where water is available for licensing:

For AP9, Market Weighton Canal, there is water available for licensing. There is 1.6 Ml/d available for licensing, providing that the Minimum Residual Flow of 3.8 Ml/d can always be met. Following this, further licences will be issued with HOF conditions.

This means that for **new** licences:

- There is water available for abstraction as long as the MRF is protected at AP9;
- We will continue licensing the available resource and implement the HOF conditions when necessary to protect flows at AP2;
- There is a time limit of 31 March 2025.

For **existing** licences:

- There is a presumption of renewal, subject to the other renewal criteria and local considerations;
- Renewals may be subject to minor changes including the addition of water efficiency conditions.

Water available for licensing

NB: These assessment points are discharge rich. There may appear to be water available, however this water could be made up of discharges from existing users. The Environment Agency has no control over their continued operation. This means that the input of water is classed as unreliable and we may not be able to licence it. We also need to be confident that where the ecology has adapted to these higher volumes of water, any abstractions will not cause ecological deterioration.

The following APs have may water available for licensing:

- **AP4 Driffield Canal**
- **AP7 River Foulness**

This means that for **new** licences:

- Licence applications in discharge rich APs will be considered on a case by case basis;
- There is a time limit of 31 March 2025, although shorter duration licences may be issued where there is uncertainty around discharge water availability.

For **existing** licences:

- There is a presumption of renewal, subject to the other renewal criteria and local considerations;

- Renewals may be subject to minor changes including the addition of water efficiency conditions.

Restricted water available for licensing

The following assessment points have restricted water available for licensing:

- **AP1 Kelk Beck**
- **AP5 Upper Mires Beck**
- **AP8 Back Delfin**

This means that for **new** licences:

- Water is only available during periods of medium to high flows with HOF conditions;
- There is a time limit of 31 March 2025.

For **existing** licences:

- There is a presumption of renewal, subject to the other renewal criteria and local considerations;
- Renewals may be subject to minor changes including the addition of water efficiency conditions.

Water not available for licensing

The following assessment point has no water available for licensing:

- **AP3 Upper Hull**
- **AP6 Lower Mires Beck**

This means that for **new** licences:

- Water may only be available during periods of high flows with HOF conditions;
- There is low reliability of abstraction;
- There is a time limit of 31 March 2025.

For **existing** licences:

- Options may be developed with licence holders on how to improve sustainability where abstraction is causing environmental damage (see [section 4.5 Restoring Sustainable Abstraction](#) for more information).

Heavily Modified Water Bodies

The only Heavily Modified Water Body (HMWB) in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area is a stretch of the River Hull from West Beck to Arram Beck. There are no reservoirs within this CAMS area.

Important local features that may affect water availability

European law provides a very high level of protection to two types of designated sites due to their special environment. These are:

- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), which contribute to biodiversity by maintaining and restoring habitats and species;
- Special Protection Area (SPA), which provides protection to birds and their nests, eggs and habitats.

Ramsar sites and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) also carry a high level of environmental importance. Further information can be found in [Section 4.5 – Restoring Sustainable Abstraction](#). Table 5 lists the water related designated sites in the Hull and East Riding CAMS.

Designation	Designated site name
Water related Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	Humber Estuary Flamborough Head & Bempton Cliffs Hornsea Mere River Hull Headwaters Tophill Low Skipsea Bail Mere Boynton Willow Garth Hoddy Cows Spring Leven Canal Pulfin Bog Lambwath Meadows The Lagoons Newbald Becksies Drewton Lane Pits Brian Mills Field
Water related Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	Humber Estuary Flamborough Head
Water related Special Protection Areas (SPA)	Humber Estuary Flamborough Head & Bempton Cliffs Hornsea Mere

Table 5 Important features that may affect water availability

In addition to these sites, the Hull and East Ridings CAMS area features a number of SSSI chalk grasslands that are indirectly dependent on water quality and 15 Biodiversity Action Plan chalk rivers and streams that are of note.

4.2.2 Groundwater

Where groundwater abstractions directly impact on surface water flows, the impact is measured at the surface water AP. Restrictions may be applied to these licences.

On principle aquifers we have divided the area into Groundwater Management Units (GWMUs). We use the information and assessments on these units to determine water availability and licence restrictions.

Where groundwater abstractions are likely to impact surface water features, or reduce baseflow to a river, a Hands-Off Level (HOL) condition may be applied to the abstraction. This is a groundwater level below which an abstractor is required to reduce or stop abstraction. HOL conditions are currently applied to licences within the chalk GWMUs of the Hull and East Riding CAMS area. Map 4 and Table 6 summarise groundwater resource availability in this area.

Groundwater management unit	Licence restriction
Sherwood Sandstone	No groundwater available see Sherwood Sandstone for further details
Chalk GWMUs North, South, East and West	Restricted groundwater availability see Chalk for further details

Table 6 Licence restrictions on groundwater abstractions in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area

Sherwood Sandstone

The Sherwood Sandstone provides one of the major groundwater resources of Yorkshire and is extensively developed for public supply. The Sherwood Sandstone covers the far west of the Hull and East Riding CAMS area and consists of a thick sequence (up to 300 metres) of fine to medium-grained sandstones with frequent marly layers.

Groundwater levels in this part of the Sherwood Sandstone have fallen below sea level and will be drawn down further if new licences are granted. This places a risk on the availability of water to existing licence holders and may lead to the introduction of saline water. We do not consider this to be acceptable because it means the water becomes unfit for most uses and we have a legal duty to protect the rights of existing abstractors.

Any new licence applications will be assessed on a case by case basis and determined using the Sherwood Sandstone numerical model and not the prescribed CAMS framework. In order to protect groundwater quality in this important aquifer we will not issue licences if the model shows that the abstraction will have negative environmental impacts.

Chalk GWMUs North, South, East and West

Hard Cretaceous chalk forms the prominent ridge of the Yorkshire Wolds. The chalk is a principle aquifer of national importance. It is used extensively for public water supply, industry, agriculture and private water supply. The chalk groundwater also provides much of the baseflow of the River Hull and its headwaters.

Water is available for licensing but restrictions will be applied to licences in order to protect both groundwater and surface water resource. Due to the connectivity of groundwater and surface waters, the resource availability of one may override the other. This means that licences could contain conditions that link groundwater abstraction to surface water flows. Hands-Off Level conditions may also be written into licences to ensure that abstraction stops if groundwater levels in the chalk aquifer fall too low. This will help to prevent saline water being drawn into the aquifer and reducing the quality of the groundwater.

4.2.3 Level Dependent Environment

The Hull and East Riding CAMS contains a [Level Dependent Environment](#) (LDE). The Hull LDE encompasses about 769km², with the North Sea to the East and the Beverley and Barmston Drain to the west. Kingston-Upon-Hull is the main settlement within the LDE catchment. The Hull LDE is made up of man-made drainage systems which are not linked. Most of these systems are pumped or controlled manually and water levels are often influenced by the tide. The area is dominated by flat, low-lying land, most of which is only just above average sea level. Towards the eastern edge of the catchment a slight rise forms the watershed between streams draining into the North Sea and those draining into the Humber Estuary. There are no reservoirs in the Hull LDE and only a few discharges inputting a small amount of water into the LDE catchment.

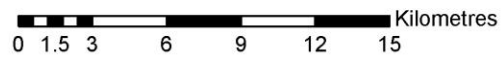
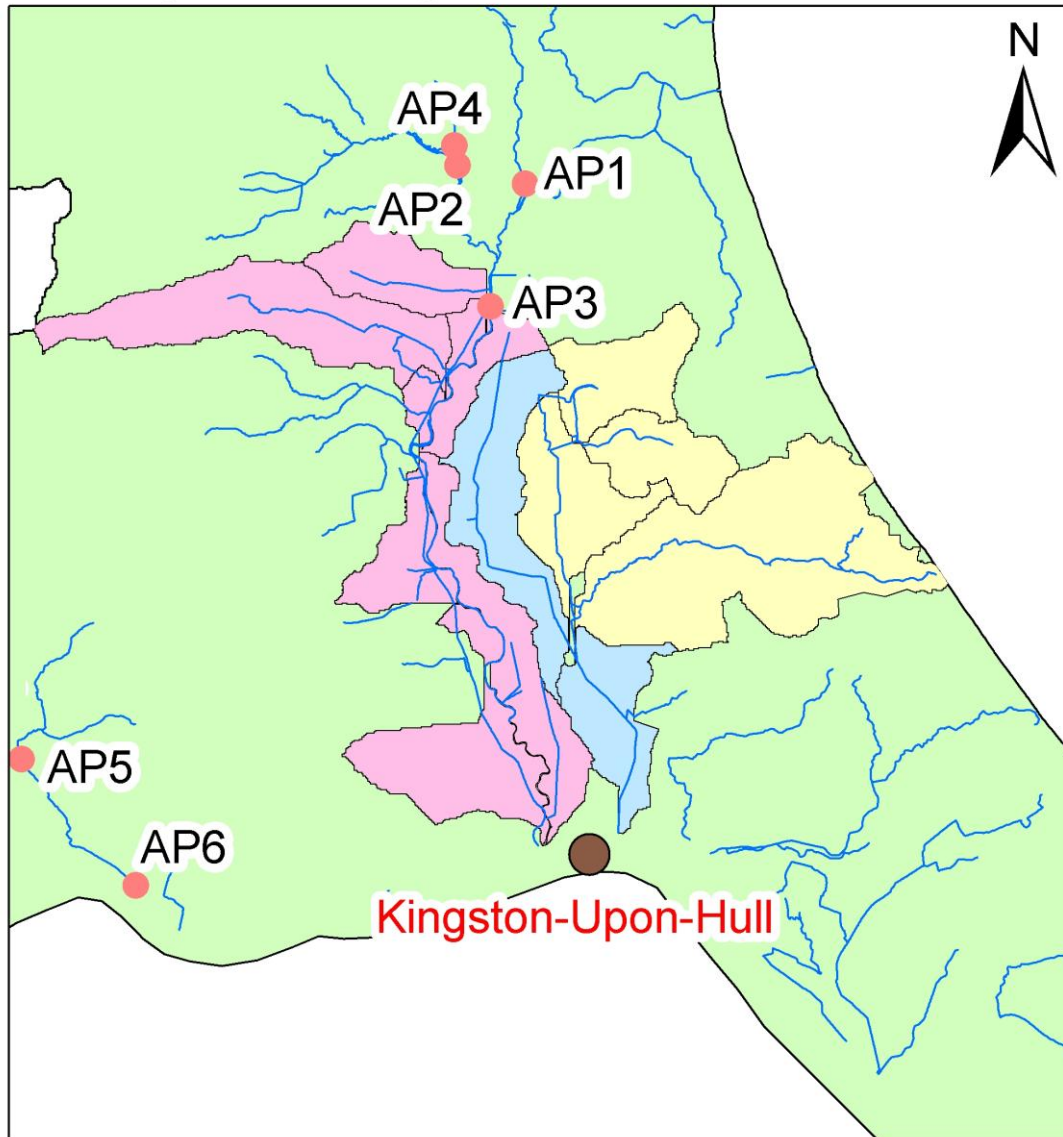
There are seven Level Dependent Management Units (LDMUs) in the Hull LDE area. Only three of these units have been assessed as part of this strategy: Beverley & Barmston Drain, Holderness Drain and Lambwith Drain. These are shown on Map 5.

There are very few abstraction licences in this area, and groundwater licence applications are generally refused due to saline intrusion. We will assess licence applications on a case by case basis in the LDMUs, as listed in Table 7.

Level Dependent Management Unit	Licence restriction
Beverley & Barmston Drain	Assessed on a case by case basis
Holderness Drain	Assessed on a case by case basis
Lambwith Drain	Assessed on a case by case basis

Table 7 Licence restrictions on abstractions in relation to Level Dependent Environments in the Hull and East Riding CAMS area

Map 5 Hull and East Riding CAMS
Level Dependent Management Units



Legend

- Hull & East Riding CAMS APs
- Hull & East Riding Rivers
- Beverley & Barnston Drain
- Holderness Drain
- Lambwith Drain
- Hull & East Riding CAMS Area

Creation date February 2013

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Map 5 Level dependant management units in the Hull and East Riding CAMS

4.2.4 Estuaries and coastal

The Humber Estuary is a nationally and internationally important site due to the habitats and species it supports. Habitats present include intertidal mudflats and sandflats, coastal saltmarsh, saline lagoons, sand dunes and standing waters. The site is also of national importance for the geological interest at South Ferriby Cliff and for the coastal geomorphology of Spurn.

The Humber Estuary supports a full range of saline conditions from the open coast to the limit of saline intrusion on the tidal rivers of the Ouse and Trent. The range of salinity, substrate and exposure to waves influences the estuarine habitats and the range of species that use them. The estuary supports important populations of wintering waterfowl and waders, and a mix of breeding birds in the lowland open waters and their margins. It is also home to an important breeding colony of grey seals, river and sea lamprey and collections of plants and invertebrates.

The far west of the Hull and East Riding CAMS area around Howden is tidal in nature. This means we are unable to assess surface water availability using the standard CAMS framework. Applications for licences around Howden and in other tidal and estuarine areas will be assessed on a case by case basis.

4.3 Opportunities for licence trading

We want to make it easier to trade water rights. A water rights trade is where a person sells all or part of their water right, as defined by their abstraction licence(s), to another person on a permanent or temporary basis. In the majority of cases a trade will involve a change in abstraction location and/or use which we will need to approve through the issue or variation of abstraction licences.

In licensing trades, as with new abstraction licences, we need to make sure that we do not cause any deterioration in WFD water body status both within the water body/bodies where the trade will take place or to downstream water bodies. The table below provides a guide to the potential for trading in water bodies of a particular CAMS water resource availability colour, as shown on Map 2.

CAMS water resource availability colour	Our approach to trading
High hydrological regime	Opportunities for trading water rights will be limited.
Water available for licensing	Allow trades of recent actual abstraction and licensed abstraction, but little demand for trading expected within water body as water available for new abstractions.
Restricted water available for licensing	There may be opportunities for licence holders to trade up to their full licensed quantities, but the quantities of water available to trade may be restricted once levels of actual abstraction reach sustainable limits.
Water not available for licensing	We will only trade recent actual abstraction but no increase in recent actual abstraction is permitted in water body. Licensed abstraction will be recovered for the environment.
HMWBs	Opportunities for trading will depend on local operating agreements and local management.

Table 8 Resource availability colours and our approach to licence trading

To find out more about licence trading please go to our [website](#).

4.4 New Authorisations

The Water Act 2003 brought all significant water abstraction under licensing control. This will result in trickle irrigation, dewatering of mines, quarries, engineering works and construction sites, abstractions related to Internal Drainage Districts, navigation abstraction and abstraction for ports and harbour authorities and other local exemptions coming into the licensing regime.

As a result we'll be able to manage water resources more effectively by ensuring that all significant activities influencing the availability of water and its impact on the environment are undertaken in a sustainable manner.

Government are still developing their policies as to how to resolve some of the issues raised during the consultation process. Government will publish their proposals before new regulations are implemented and expect to do this at least three months before commencement so that we can issue guidance to those affected by the changes. Where we have details of these abstractions we have included them in our assessments to consider how they impact on the catchment.

4.5 Restoring Sustainable Abstraction

Where water abstractions cause or potentially cause actual flows to fall short of the EFIs and result in environmental damage, we may need to change or even revoke existing abstractions in order to achieve a sustainable abstraction regime. Within the Hull and East Riding CAMS there are six water bodies in which recent actual flows have fallen below the EFI. The abstraction licences within these water bodies that cause these issues are being investigated under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and may then go forward to become part of the Restoring Sustainable Abstraction (RSA) programme. Investigations into the impact caused by these licences, individually or cumulatively, will result in options being developed with licence holders on how to improve sustainability. Investigations will include a cost/benefit analysis. Information on how licences in the RSA programme are dealt with can be found in our [Step by Step guide](#) on our website.

Investigation of Water Framework Directive water bodies

In addition to the RSA programme, we are investigating whether reduced water flow may be causing problems under the WFD. About four per cent of rivers are failing to support WFD good ecological status due to pressures from over-abstraction.

Habitats Directive

Under the Habitats Regulations we have assessed the effects of existing abstraction licences and will assess new applications to make sure they are not impacting on internationally important nature conservation sites. These sites are known as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). If your current licence has been reviewed under this legislation to assess its impact you will already know about the review. If we haven't contacted you yet then your licence is either not near a SAC/SPA or isn't having an impact on these sites. If our assessment shows that a new application could have an impact on a SAC/SPA we have to follow strict rules in setting a time limit for that licence. These are:

- we may be able to grant the licence but only with a short time limit. This allows us to monitor the impact of the abstraction on a SAC/SPA and change the licence if necessary;
- if we can't determine that your application will not affect the site we have to either put conditions on the licence so that it cannot affect the site or refuse the application. If we grant the licence we may ask you to monitor its impact;
- if our assessment shows that there isn't an impact on the site we will manage the application according to the principles in this document.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Licensing Strategy. If you have any questions about it, or if you want to apply for an abstraction licence or make changes to a licence that you already have, then please contact us:

- by telephone on 03708 506 506
- by email at enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk
- or visit our website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk

Glossary of terms

Abstraction	Removal of water from a source of supply (surface or groundwater).
Abstraction licence	The authorisation granted by the Environment Agency to allow the removal of water.
Assessment Point Unit	Point at which the flow from upstream catchment is assessed.
Catchment	The area from which precipitation and groundwater will collect and contribute to the flow of a specific river.
Consumptive abstraction	Abstraction where a significant proportion of the water is not returned either directly or indirectly to the source of supply after use. For example for the use of spray irrigation.
Discharge	The release of substances (i.e. water, sewage, etc.) into surface waters.
Environmental flow indicator	Flow indicator to prevent environmental deterioration of rivers, set in line with new UK standards set by UKTAG.
Full licence	A licence to abstract water from a source of supply over a period of 28 days or more.
Groundwater	Water that is contained in underground rocks.
Hands-Off Flow	A condition attached to an abstraction licence which states that if flow (in the river) falls below the level specified on the licence, the abstractor will be required to reduce or stop the abstraction.
Hands-Off Level	A river flow or borehole (groundwater) level below which an abstractor is required to reduce or stop abstraction.
Impoundment	An impoundment is a structure that obstructs or impedes the flow of inland water, such as a dam, weir or other constructed works.
Level Dependent Environment	A network of (raised) river channels flowing (although often ponded) above the level of surrounding land. The lower-lying land has a network of drainage ditches, which remove water from the lower-lying land into the main river channels during the winter and provide an irrigation resource during the summer, during which time the ditches are topped up from the main river channels. Pumps, lateral off-take sluices (slackers), siphons and other structures connect the main river channels and the drainage ditch networks.
Protected right	Means a right to abstract, which someone has by virtue of the small abstractions exemptions defined in the Water Act 2003 or by virtue of having an abstraction licence. The right protected is the quantity that can be abstracted up to that allowed by the exemption or the terms of the licence. The small abstraction exemptions defined by the Water Act 2003 are for domestic and agricultural purposes (excluding spray irrigation) not exceeding 20 m ³ /d.
Surface water	This is a general term used to describe all water features such as rivers, streams, springs, ponds and lakes.
Transfer licence	A licence to abstract water from one source of supply over a period of 28 days or more for the purpose of; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. transferring water to another source of supply; or, 2. transferring water to the same source of supply, but at another point, in the course of dewatering activities in connection with mining, quarrying, engineering, building or other operations (whether underground or on the surface); without intervening use.
Water body	Units of either surface water or groundwater at which assessments are completed for WFD.

List of abbreviations

AMP	Asset Management Plans
AP	Assessment Point
ASB	Abstraction Sensitivity Bands
AWB	Artificial Water body
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies
CED	Common End Date
Defra	Department of Environment Fisheries and Rural Affairs
EA	Environment Agency
EFI	Environmental Flow Indicator
FL	Full Licensed (scenario)
GEP	Good Ecological Potential
GES	Good Ecological Status
GW	Groundwater
GWMU	Groundwater Management Unit
HES	High Ecological Status
HMWB	Heavily Modified Water Body
HOF	Hands-off Flow
HOL	Hands-off Level
LDE	Level Dependent Environment
LDMU	Level Dependent Management Unit
MI/d	Megalitres per day
mAOD	Metres above ordnance datum
MRF	Minimum Residual Flow
Q95	The flow of a river which is exceeded on average for 95% of the time
RA	Recent Actual (scenario)
RSA	Restoring Sustainable Abstraction
RBMP	River Basin Management Plans
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
SW	Surface water
UKTAG	United Kingdom's Technical Advisory Group
WB	Water body
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WRGIS	Water Resources Geographical Information System

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