

# Habitats Regulations Assessment

Addendum Report for:

**Wigmore Group Neighbourhood Area**

**November 2017**



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## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 To ensure that the requirements of the Habitats Directive and Regulations are met, it is necessary to consider the modifications through the HRA process to the draft Wigmore Group NDP. The parish council are undertaking an additional reg14 draft consultation to ensure that all the housing issues have been addressed. Some changes have occurred between the first and second drafts of the NDP.
- 1.2 The purpose of this HRA Addendum Report is to detail the findings of the screening of proposed changes to policies and consider if they significantly affect the conclusions of the earlier HRA Report (November 2016).
- 1.3 The refinements are not considered to significantly affect the conclusions of the earlier HRA report.

## 2.0 Screening of proposed modifications to the NDP

- 2.1 Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations 2010 requires that a Screening Assessment be undertaken, in order to identify the 'likely significant effects' of a NDP. Accordingly, a screening matrix was prepared (September 2016) and this determined the extent to which any of the policies in the Wigmore Group NDP would be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC and Downton Gorge SAC.
- 2.2 The findings of the screening matrix can be found in Appendices 1 and 2 of that report (September 2015).
- 2.3 The screening matrix took the approach of screening each policy, objective and site allocation individually, which is consistent with current guidance. The results from the HRA reports for the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) were also taken into consideration.
- 2.4 For full details of the European Sites' attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Wigmore Group Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, September 2014, can be found in Appendix 3 of the HRA report (September 2016). This information made it possible to identify the features of each site which determine site integrity, as well as the specific sensitivities of each site, therefore enabling later analysis of how the potential impacts of the Wigmore Group Neighbourhood Plan may affect site integrity.
- 2.5 None of the Wigmore Group NDP objectives and policies (September 2016) were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the European site. This conclusion is based on assumptions and information contained within the Wigmore Group NDP, the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the HRA for the Local Plan (Core Strategy) published on the Council's website.
- 2.6 In many cases this is because the policies themselves would not result in development, i.e. they related instead to criteria for development. In several cases the policies also included mitigation measures to help support the natural environment including biodiversity, and therefore no significant effect conclusion could be reached. These policies have the potential to mitigate some of the possible adverse effects arising from other policies within the NDP. Downton Gorge SAC is vulnerable to air quality associated with poultry units and other intensive agricultural practices, Wigmore Group is not proposing either of these within its policies.
- 2.7 It was also concluded that the Wigmore Group NDP will be unlikely to have any in-combination effects with any plans from neighbouring parishes, as any sites currently allocated in the adjacent parishes' NDP is within the parameters set out within the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy),
- 2.8 Therefore it was concluded that the **Wigmore Group draft NDP will not have a likely significant effect on the water quality of the River Wye SAC nor air quality on the Downton Gorge SAC.**

### 3.0 Summary of main findings following Regulation 14 consultation

- 3.1 The proposed amendments to the Draft NDP following the Regulation 14 consultation are screened to consider if they are likely to significantly affect the findings of the previous HRA Report, prepared in September 2016. A summary of the main findings are provided below.
- 3.2 Five policies have been amended since the original reg14 draft and three sites have been added within the Wigmore settlement boundary. The alternations to the policies are considered to be minor in nature in terms of the HRA assessment.
- 3.3 The proportional growth requirement for Wigmore Group is approximately 52 dwellings. The amendments to the plan have included the allocation of housing sites in order to demonstrate delivery of this requirement. Four sites were considered for allocation and have been assessed within appendix 2. Three of these have become site allocations within the revised reg14 NDP. The fourth was rejected due to highways issues rather than any specifically outcome from the HRA assessment.
- 3.4 With regards to the River Wye SAC, only a small rural part of the neighbourhood area is within the River Lugg hydrological catchments. The policies within the plan mainly target development to the village of Wigmore and Leinthall Starks which are both outside the catchment.
- 3.5 No poultry units or intensive agricultural practices are promoted within the plan, therefore the NDP will not have a likely significant effect on the Downton Gorge SAC
- 3.6 It is unlikely that the Wigmore Group Plan will have any in-combination effects with any Plans from neighbouring parish councils as the level of growth proposed is the same as that proposed for the Housing Market Area in the Herefordshire Core Strategy and all of the proposed housing sites will be of a small scale.

### 4.0 Conclusion

- 4.1 With reference to section 3 above, amendments have been made to Policies WG1, WG2, WG4, WG6 and WG7. However none are considered to affect the findings of the previous HRA report. Three sites have been included, none of which are considered to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC as they are outside of the river catchment area.
- 4.2 Therefore the earlier conclusion that the **Wigmore Group NDP will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC and Downton Gorge SAC** remains valid.

### 5.0 Next steps

- 5.1 This Addendum Report will be published alongside both the revised draft Reg14 NDP and earlier HRA Report for consultation. Any changes to the plan that arise from this consultation will be subject to further screening, in order to consider their impact on the water quality of the River Wye SAC and the air quality of Downton Gorge SAC.

# Appendix 1

**Consultation date: 12 December 2016 to 30 January 2017**

**Consultation title:** Wigmore Group Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14

*N.B. This consultation feedback is **only** for comments received on the HRA of the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan*

Consultee	Summary of Comments	Response to Comments
Natural England	Agree with the conclusions that the Wigmore NDP is unlikely to have significant effect on the River Wye SAC	Noted
Heritage England	Comments received but nothing specific regarding the HRA	
Environment Agency	Comments received but nothing specific regarding the HRA	
Natural Resources Wales	No comments received	

# Appendix 2

NDP objectives, options policies	HRA Screening of Emerging NDP objectives, options and policies				
	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the objective/option/policy	Likely effect if objective/option/policy implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites?	European Sites potentially affected	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of objective/policy and to be considered as part of Appropriate Assessment	Could the policy have likely significant effects on European sites (taking mitigation into account?)
<b>Policy WG1</b> New Housing development in Wigmore	Small scale proportionate growth within the settlement boundary of Wigmore.	The River Wye does not flow near the parish but the western part of the neighbourhood area is within the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg. The village of Wigmore to which this policy is targeted is outside this area.  This policy does not contain uses will not affect the air quality associated with Downton Gorge.	n/a	n/a	No: this policy will allow for the small scale sustainable growth of Wigmore village in line with Core Strategy policy RA1/RA2. Wigmore village is outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg.
<b>Site 1</b> Perry Field	Small scale proportionate growth within the settlement boundary of Wigmore for approximately 22	The River Wye does not flow near the parish but the western part of the neighbourhood area is within the hydrological	n/a	n/a	No: this policy will allow for the small scale sustainable growth of Wigmore village in line with

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	<p>dwelling.</p>	<p>catchment of the River Lugg. The village of Wigmore to which this policy is targeted is outside this area.</p> <p>This policy does not contain uses will not affect the air quality associated with Downton Gorge.</p>			<p>Core Strategy policy RA1/RA2. Wigmore village is outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg.</p>
<p><b>Site 2</b> Land at Moorview</p>	<p>Small scale proportionate growth within the settlement boundary of Wigmore for approximately 20 dwellings.</p>	<p>The River Wye does not flow near the parish but the western part of the neighbourhood area is within the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg. The village of Wigmore to which this policy is targeted is outside this area.</p> <p>This policy does not contain uses will not affect the air quality associated with Downton Gorge</p>	n/a	n/a	<p>No: this policy will allow for the small scale sustainable growth of Wigmore village in line with Core Strategy policy RA1/RA2. Wigmore village is outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg.</p>
<p><b>Site 3</b> Land at Ford Street</p>	<p>Small scale proportionate growth within the settlement boundary of Wigmore for</p>	<p>The River Wye does not flow near the parish but the western part of the</p>	n/a	n/a	<p>No: this policy will allow for the small scale sustainable growth of Wigmore</p>

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	approximately 10 dwellings.	neighbourhood area is within the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg. The village of Wigmore to which this policy is targeted is outside this area.  This policy does not contain uses will not affect the air quality associated with Downton Gorge			village in line with Core Strategy policy RA1/RA2. Wigmore village is outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg.
<b>Site 4</b> Land to the rear of Court House	Small scale proportionate growth	The River Wye does not flow near the parish but the western part of the neighbourhood area is within the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg. The village of Wigmore to which this policy is targeted is outside this area.  This policy does not contain uses will not affect the air quality associated with Downton Gorge	n/a	n/a	No: this policy will allow for the small scale sustainable growth of Wigmore village in line with Core Strategy policy RA1/RA2. Wigmore village is outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg.
<b>Policy WG2</b>	Small scale local connection housing	Outside of the River Lugg catchment and not	n/a	n/a	No; this policy will allow for very small

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New Housing development in Leinthall Starkes	within the village of Leinthall Starkes	proposing any uses effecting air quality in the Downton Gorge.			scale sustainable growth in line with Policy RA2 in an area not effected by either SAC
<b>Policy WG4</b> Wigmore Village	Protecting existing services. Criteria for new retail, commercial and community facilities.	The River Wye does not flow near the parish but the western part of the neighbourhood area is within the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg. The village of Wigmore to which this policy is targeted is outside this area.  This policy does not contain uses will not affect the air quality associated with Downton Gorge.	n/a	n/a	No; this policy would only lead to small scale village retail, commercial or community facilities and potential within areas outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Lugg and Wye.
<b>Policy WG6</b> Community Infrastructure Levy	Supporting increase in community facilities within the rural areas.	n/a	n/a	n/a	No; this would only lead to support for community projects.
<b>Policy W7</b> Design of development in Wigmore Group parish	Promotion of design principle in new developments	n/a	n/a	n/a	No; this policy in itself would not lead to development but promote design principles.