

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Report for:

Almeley Neighbourhood Area

January 2018



Almeley HRA

HRA Screening Assessment

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Screening Assessment relates to a Neighbourhood Development Plan that is considered to be in general conformity with higher level strategic plans, such as the Herefordshire Core Strategy and the National planning Policy Framework. The screening stage involves assessing broadly whether the Draft Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).
- 1.2 Almeley Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Almeley Parish, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the Parish up to 2031. This HRA reviews the Draft Almeley Neighbourhood Plan November 2017.
- 1.3 The NDP has 20 criteria based policies which includes the allocation of 2 sites within the policies. It provides general policies that clarify and provide detail to the policies within the Herefordshire Core Strategy therefore it requires a high level screening assessment to build upon the HRA Screening Assessment Report for the Herefordshire Core Strategy. This high level screening assessment should be read in combination with the Herefordshire Pre-submission publication of the Local Plan-Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment Report (April 2014) and ensures that there will not be any significant impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.4 The map below shows Almeley Neighbourhood Area with the European Site highlighted.



2 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment of neighbourhood plans

- 2.1 The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the "Habitats Regulations" published for England and Wales in July 2007 and updated in 2013. Therefore, when preparing its NDP, Almeley Parish Council is required by law to carry out an assessment known as "Habitats Regulations Assessment". It is also a requirement in Regulation 32 schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive provides that:
Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.
- 2.3 HRA is an impact-led assessment and refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a neighbourhood plan on one or more European sites, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):
- **SPAs** are classified under the European Council Directive 'on the conservation of wild birds' (79/409/EEC; 'Birds Directive') for the protection of **wild birds and their habitats** (including particularly rare and vulnerable species listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, and migratory species).
 - **SACs** are designated under the Habitats Directive and target **particular habitats** (Annex 1) and/or species (Annex II) identified as being of European importance.
- 2.4 For ease of reference during HRA, general practice has been that these three designations are collectively referred to as either **Natura 2000** or **European sites**. This means that a Screening Assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans or projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.

3 Methodology

- 3.1 As the Almeley NDP is not directly connected with the management of any European sites, and includes proposals for development which may affect European sites, it is necessary under Regulation 102(1)(a) of the Habitats Regulations 2010 to undertake screening for likely significant effects on European sites.
- 3.2 The HRA of neighbourhood plans is undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy in a neighbourhood plan would adversely affect the integrity of the site in question. This is judged in terms of the implications of the plan for a site's 'qualifying features' (i.e. those Annex I habitats, Annex II species, and Annex I bird populations for which it has been designated) and are measured with reference to the conservation objectives for those qualifying features as defined by Natural England.
- 3.3 The first process is to undertake an initial screening report to determine the need to undertake the requirement for a HRA, this initial screening identifies whether the Plan could impact upon any European site that could be within the Neighbourhood Area or nearby.
- 3.4 If a European Site is within the Neighbourhood Area or the Neighbourhood Area could impact upon a European site then this will need to be taken into account and a full screening assessment will need to be undertaken.

- 3.5 The full screening stage consists of a description of the plan, identification of potential effects on European Sites, assessing the effects on European Sites (taking into account potential mitigation provided by other policies in the plan). For Neighbourhood Plans the outcome should demonstrate there are no likely effects upon the European sites. If any likely effects occur then there will need to be amendments to the NDP made and be re-screened until all likely effects have been mitigated.

4 Results of the Initial Screening Report and options

- 4.1 The initial Screening report (July 2012) found that the Neighbourhood Area is in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC and that the Parish is within the River Lugg catchment area. Therefore a full screening assessment is required.
- 4.2 For full details of the River Lugg and River Wye SAC attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Almeley Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, May 2016, can be found in Appendix 3 of this HRA report. 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 Almeley Neighbourhood Plan may affect site integrity.
- 4.3 The initial options for the NDP were assessed to determine their environmental impact that could affect the River Wye SAC. Of the 7 options put forward the no NDP option was not considered viable for the Parish. The remaining options all proposed growth however they would all be within the proportional growth targets of the Core strategy and are therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the SAC.
- 4.4 As Almeley progresses from options onto their NDP policies, the Plan will need to identify ways in which the least effect on the River Wye SAC could be achieved, alongside taking forward the preferred option from the consultation from the community. A list of the options assessed can be found in Appendix 1, and the Assessment matrix for the options can be found Appendix 2.

5 Description of the Almeley Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 5.1 The Draft Almeley NDP presents detailed policies for development in the Neighbourhood Area, which is equivalent to the group parish boundary, up to 2031. The first part of the Plan introduces the Plan and its preparation and discusses the background of the village.
- 5.2 The NDP then details the vision for the Group Parish over the Plan period and 5 objectives of how this will be achieved. The objectives are as follow:

Objective 1: To maintain the rural character of the Parish, its village and hamlets. This means:

- a) Landscape character, views and features of the Parish have been preserved, especially the views southwards across to the Brecon Beacons National Park.
- b) The historic aspect of the village, especially its Conservation Area, and hamlets have been preserved or enhanced.
- c) The Parish's commons and open spaces have been protected, conserved and maintained.
- d) The contribution made by agriculture to the community and local environment has been recognised and is supported.

Objective 2: To minimise the effect of further developments on the countryside and landscapes. This means:

- a) There has been no net-loss in biodiversity and the opportunities to enhance wildlife have been taken.

- b) The rural nature of the parish has been maintained.
- c) Any new development has been sensitively integrated to blend with existing buildings, settings and the landscape.
- d) Land has been used efficiently.
- e) High quality agricultural land has been protected.

Objective 3: To support the rural economy within the Parish through:

- a) Enabling diversification of businesses where this is in scale with the character of the area;
- b) Supporting home-working;
- c) Encouraging live-work units;
- d) Protecting high quality agricultural land.

Objective 4: To provide housing opportunities for existing and future residents of the parish, including affordable, private and self-build homes. This means:

- a) The amount of new housing meets the strategic requirements of Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy.
- b) A mix of housing, including housing for older people, has been provided;
- c) Affordable and self-build homes are available to meet local needs, particularly those with a local connection.
- d) New development is of a scale that fits sensitively into the relevant settlement.
- e) New housing has been designed to a high standard in terms of appearance and sustainability.

Objective 5: To accommodate future development within the capacity of local infrastructure. This means:

- a) Local services such as the village school, village hall, shop and church have been supported where possible through any new development.
- b) New development has not resulted in on-street parking or road congestion and road safety problems have been improved where possible.
- c) The capacity of utility services, local drainage and the highway network has not been exceeded.
- d) Residential and local amenity has not been adversely affected by new development.
- e) Alternative means of transport to cars, in particular local bus services and shared transport have been encouraged.

5.3 The NDP also sets out 20 policies on various topics based on the objective headings above and also for the villages, these include:

ALM1: Promoting sustainable development

ALM2: Development Strategy

ALM3: Maintaining and protecting the landscape and its features

ALM4: Protecting heritage assets

ALM5: Protection of local green space

ALM6: Design Appearance

ALM7: Sustainable design

ALM8: Diversification through live/work units

ALM9: General purpose agricultural buildings and intensive livestock units

ALM10: Housing development in Almeley

ALM11: Land to north of West View

ALM12: Housing development in Woonton

ALM13: Redevelopment of land at Woonton Farm

ALM14: Residential use associated with historic farmsteads

ALM15: Providing for local housing need

ALM16: Highway requirements

ALM17: Sewage and sewerage infrastructure

ALM18: Protection from flood risk

ALM19: Protection and enhancement of community facilities and services

ALM20: Contributions to community services, youth provision and recreation facilities.

6 Identification of other plans and projects which may have ‘in-combination’ effects

- 6.1 Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations 2010 requires an appropriate assessment where a land use plan (not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. In addition, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulation 2012 a NDP cannot have a significant effect on any European Site whether alone or in combination with another Plan.
- 6.2 There are a number of potentially relevant plans and projects which may result in in-combination effects with the Core Strategy across Herefordshire, these plans have been reviewed and can be found in Appendix 2 of the pre-submission publication of the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment (May 2014). It is seen that as this NDP does not go over and beyond the requirements set out in the Core Strategy this review will also be substantial for the NDP.
- 6.3 The HRA for the Core Strategy also identifies that both the Water Cycle Study for Herefordshire, which indicates the potential for planned water abstraction requirements combined with pressures on European Sites from the Core Strategy policies, and the work on the Nutrient Management Plan, to ensure the favourable conservation status of the SAC in respect of phosphate levels as soon as possible and at the latest by 2027, have both been considered as part of the in-combination assessment.

7 Assessment of the ‘likely significant effects’ of the Almeley NDP

- 7.1 As required under Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations 2010, a screening assessment has been undertaken to identify the ‘likely significant effects’ of the NDP. A screening matrix was prepared in order to identify whether any of the policies in the Plan would be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC.
- 7.2 The findings of the screening matrix can be found in the Screening Matrix in Appendix 2 of this report. Colour coding was used to record the likely impacts of the policies on the European site and its qualifying habitats and species as shown in the table 1 below.

Red	There are likely to be significant effects
Green	Significant effects are unlikely

- 7.3 The Screening matrix took the approach of screening each policy individually, which is consistent with current guidance documents. The results from the HRA report for the pre-submission version of the Herefordshire Core Strategy was also taking into consideration.
- 7.4 Mitigation of some of the identified potential effects could be achieved through implementation of the other policies within the NDP which require good practice measures during and after construction phases, such as more efficient use of water, reduction in waste and encouragement of recycling. The provision and

encouragement of use of more sustainable transport measures when improving the transport infrastructure, will also help to reduce car traffic around the parish and surrounding areas.

8 Conclusions from the Screening Matrix

- 8.1 None of the Draft Almeley Neighbourhood Plan (November 2017) policies were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. Based on assumptions and information contained within the Almeley Parish Plan, Herefordshire Core Strategy and the Pre-submission version / proposed modifications addendum of the HRA for the Core Strategy all of the NDP policies were found to be unlikely to result in significant effects on the River Wye SAC.
- 8.2 In many cases this is because the policy itself would not result in development, i.e., it related instead to criteria for development. In a number of cases the policies also included measures to help support the natural environment, including biodiversity and therefore no significant effect conclusion could be reached. In addition, these policies have the potential to mitigate some of the possible adverse effects arising from other policies.
- 8.3 The plan is mainly criteria based, however does allocate sites.
- 8.4 Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) has stated for the Core Strategy that there is sufficient existing permitted headroom in the Sewerage Treatment works serving the Almeley area to continue to treat the water from the amount of housing provided for in the Core Strategy policies. In addition, the preparation of the Nutrient Management Plan for the River Wye SAC should ensure that development within Herefordshire which can be accommodated within existing water discharge permits would not be likely to have a significant effect upon the River Wye SAC.
- 8.5 It is unlikely that the Almeley 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 and in line with the proportional growth specified in the Core Strategy.
- 8.6 It is therefore concluded that the Almeley Parish Plan will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC and Parish Councillors will welcome the conclusion as to no likely significant effect.
- 8.7 Any further amendments to policies (post November 2017) will be rescreened if required and an addendum to this report will be produced.

Appendix 1

Appendix 5 – Almeley Parish (Reg 14)

Options Considered

December 2017

Option 1 – small amount of new housing development in Almeley, with no more development in Woonton.
Option 2 – retain current settlement boundary for Almeley village, restrict development in Woonton and rely on Parish windfall.
Option 3 – extend Almeley settlement boundary to incorporate a site large enough for affordable housing, with no more development in Woonton.
Option 4 – extend Almeley settlement boundary to incorporate a site large enough for affordable housing and limited further development in Woonton.
Option 5 – retain current settlement boundary for Almeley village, while allowing limited development in Woonton.
Option 6 – small extension to Almeley village settlement boundary with limited further development in Woonton.
Option 7 – Do nothing

Appendix 2

Table 1: HRA Screening of Emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan Objectives, Options and Policies

Parish Council Name: Almeley

NDP Title: Almeley NDP

Date undertaken: December 2017

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? (Yes/No, with reasons) <i>(If no, progress on to next objective/option/policy. If yes, progress on to next set of columns in row)</i>	European Sites potentially affected (Refer to Initial Screening)	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of objective/option/policy and to be considered as part of Appropriate Assessment	Could the policy have likely significant effects on European sites (taking mitigation into account?)
OBJECTIVES		<i>The significance of the effect is key when assessing the effects.</i>			
Objective 1	Maintaining the rural character of the parish and its hamlets would ensure that the landscape character, views and features of the parish would be	This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and preservation of the character and history of the parish, it would not lead directly to	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation site as an outcome to this objective to mitigate the impact.

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	<p>preserved and the historic core, and conservation area would be preserved or enhanced. Commons and open spaces are also protected. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>	<p>development but and there would be no significant effect on the River Wye catchment.</p> <p>If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies to ensure no likely significant effect would occur.</p>			
Objective 2	<p>Minimising the effect of further development on the countryside and landscape. There would be no net loss of biodiversity and the rural nature of the parish would be maintained, with land being used efficiently and high quality agricultural land being protected.</p> <p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>	<p>This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and preservation of the character and history of the parish, it would not lead directly to development but and there would be no significant effect on the River Wye catchment.</p> <p>If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies to ensure no likely significant effect would occur.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation site as an outcome to this objective to mitigate the impact.
Objective 3	<p>Supporting the rural economy within the parish, enabling</p>	<p>This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and</p>	River Wye (including	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation site as an

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	<p>diversification of businesses, supporting home working and live work units as well as protecting high quality land.</p> <p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>	<p>preservation of the character and history of the parish, it would not lead directly to development but and there would be no significant effect on the River Wye catchment.</p> <p>If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies to ensure no likely significant effect would occur.</p>	River Lugg) SAC		outcome to this objective to mitigate the impact.
Objective 4	<p>Providing housing opportunities for existing and future residents of the parish, including affordable and self-build units, while ensuring that the housing meets the strategic requirements of the Core Strategy, as well as being designed to a high standard of design and sustainability credentials.</p> <p>This objective would lead to development but specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be</p>	<p>This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and preservation of the character and history of the parish, it would not lead directly to development but and there would be no significant effect on the River Wye catchment.</p> <p>If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies to ensure no likely significant effect would occur.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation site as an outcome to this objective to mitigate the impact.

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	positively addressed within the policy wording				
Objective 5	<p>The accommodation of future development within the capacity of the local infrastructure. The school, village hall, shop and church should be supported through development as well as enhancement of local utility services and drainage. The encouragement of alternative forms of transport would also be encouraged.</p> <p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording</p>	<p>This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and preservation of the character and history of the parish, it would not lead directly to development but and there would be no significant effect on the River Wye catchment.</p> <p>If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies to ensure no likely significant effect would occur.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation site as an outcome to this objective to mitigate the impact.
OPTIONS					
Option 1	This option would see a small amount of new housing development in Almeley, with no more development in Woonton.	Pursuing this option would give some certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment but would work towards mitigating impact on the SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation of sites policy to mitigate.

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Option 2 .	Retain current settlement boundary for Almeley village, restrict development in Woonton and rely on Parish windfall. Defining a settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside.	Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment but would work towards mitigating impact on the SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation of sites policy to mitigate.
Option 3 –	Extend Almeley settlement boundary to incorporate a site large enough for affordable housing, with no more development in Woonton. Defining and extending settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside. Specific	Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment. If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.

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	environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.				
Option 4	<p>Extend Almeley settlement boundary to incorporate a site large enough for affordable housing and limited further development in Woonton.</p> <p>The settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>	Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment. If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.
Option 5	<p>Retain current settlement boundary for Almeley village, while allowing limited development in Woonton.</p> <p>The settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define</p>	Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment. If required mitigation criteria can be added to site	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.

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	those areas considered as the built form and open countryside. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.	allocations policies.			
Option 6	<p>Small extension to Almeley village settlement boundary with limited further development in Woonton.</p> <p>The settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>	Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment. If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.
Option 7 – Do nothing	Not producing a neighbourhood plan would result in any future	Core Strategy HRA has examined the likely significant effects of the	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	N/A	N/A

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	<p>growth decisions within the parish being made based on the strategic policies within the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Proportional housing and employment growth would be in accordance with the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>Core Strategy rural policies in May 2014 and April 2015 and concluded that there are no LSE but acknowledges the role of neighbourhood plans to provide additional certainty.</p>			
POLICIES					
ALM1:	Promoting sustainable development.	N/A	N/A	N/A	No: this policy seeks to include of renewable energy design within any residential schemes but does not directly lead to development itself.
ALM2:	Development Strategy guiding development, site allocations and settlement boundaries.	<p>This policy will not directly lead to development but will guide any future development.</p> <p>Any development could have a possible increase in vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on the location of the development of all</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording. Policies LD2, SD1, SD3 and SD4 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy)	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.

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		development.			
ALM3:	Maintaining and protecting the landscape and its features	N/A	N/A	N/A	No: this policy seeks to maintain and protect the landscape and its features but does not directly lead to development itself.
ALM4:	Protecting heritage assets	N/A	N/A	N/A	No: this policy seeks to address conservation and enhancement of the historic environment but does not directly lead to development itself.
ALM5:	Protection of local green space	N/A	N/A	N/A	No: this policy seeks to protect greenspaces in the parish but does not directly lead to development itself.
ALM6:	Design Appearance	N/A	N/A	N/A	No, there will be no direct development as a result of this policy but guidance as to the design of any future development and will be in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2

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					and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.
ALM7:	Sustainable design	N/A	N/A	N/A	No, there will be no direct development as a result of this policy but guidance as to the sustainable design of any future development and will be in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.
ALM8:	Diversification through live/work units	New development or diversification through live work units would lead to some infrastructure and or environmental impacts as a result of increased activity. Possible increase in	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.

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		<p>vehicular movements, business activity and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the development, size and type of diversification.</p>			
ALM9:	General purpose agricultural buildings and intensive livestock units	<p>New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts as a result of increased agricultural activity.</p> <p>Possible increase in vehicular movements, business activity and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the development, size and type.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	<p>This policy potentially should help to reduce the impact of intensive farming on the parish.</p> <p>Policies LD2, SD1, SD3 and SD4 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and FW1 within the NDP will aim to help avoid any adverse impacts on the River Wye from any new employment or business uses.</p> <p>Whilst the Local Plan (Core Strategy) has yet to be adopted and cannot, therefore, be relied upon in too much detail, the implications of the Main Modifications to its policies, for the earlier</p>	<p>Mitigation to the policy will be required to ensure that the outcomes and aims of the policy are clear and structured and that it addresses the correct aspects of land use issues and environmental issues.</p>

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				<p>HRA findings, are set out in an addendum report, prepared in April 2015 and published on the Council's website. This addendum report reveals that none of the changes proposed to the policies through the Main Modifications would affect the conclusions set out in the September 2014 HRA Report. It also makes clear that the roll out of the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) should avoid adverse effects.</p> <p>Improved water efficiency measures, metering and addressing leakages in the supply may help to mitigate any additional pressures on the water supply as a result of new development.</p>	
ALM10:	Housing development in Almeley	New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts of as a result of direct development in Almeley.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	Specific environmental issues could be investigated during further site investigation and be	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards

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		<p>Possible increase in vehicular movements, business activity and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the development, size and type.</p>		<p>positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW</p> <p>The policy could be strengthened with the inclusion of the following: Development should ensure that any adverse effects on the River Wye SAC can be avoided or mitigated. Development will only be permitted when it does not compromise the ability of the NMP to deliver the necessary overall nutrient reductions along those stretches of the River Wye SAC which are already exceeding water</p>	<p>which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Although it is acknowledged that there will be an increase in the demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment, the latest version of the HRA underlying the Core Strategy (April 2015) confirms that the roll out of Policy RA2 across the rural areas should not lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the River Wye SAC, provided the mitigation measures set out in the NMP are implemented</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further</p>
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				quality targets or at risk of doing so.	assessments will be undertaken at site allocation stage.
ALM12:	Housing development in Woonton	<p>New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts of as a result of direct development in Woonton.</p> <p>Possible increase in vehicular movements, business activity and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the development, size and type.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	<p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during further site investigation and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW</p> <p>The policy could be strengthened with the inclusion of the following: Development should ensure that any adverse effects on the River Wye SAC can be avoided or mitigated.</p>	<p>No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Although it is acknowledged that there will be an increase in the demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment, the latest version of the HRA underlying the Core Strategy (April 2015) confirms that the roll out of Policy RA2 across the rural areas should not lead to adverse effects on</p>

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				Development will only be permitted when it does not compromise the ability of the NMP to deliver the necessary overall nutrient reductions along those stretches of the River Wye SAC which are already exceeding water quality targets or at risk of doing so.	the integrity of the River Wye SAC, provided the mitigation measures set out in the NMP are implemented Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at site allocation stage.
ALM14:	Residential use associated with historic farmsteads	<p>New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts of as a result of direct development in the parish.</p> <p>Possible increase in vehicular movements, business activity and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	<p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during further site investigation and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW</p>	<p>No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Although it is acknowledged that there will be an increase in the demand for water abstraction and</p>

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		development, size and type.			<p>sewage treatment, the latest version of the HRA underlying the Core Strategy (April 2015) confirms that the roll out of Policy RA2 across the rural areas should not lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the River Wye SAC, provided the mitigation measures set out in the NMP are implemented</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at site allocation stage.</p>
ALM15:	Providing for local housing need	<p>New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts of as a result of direct development in the parish.</p> <p>Possible increase in vehicular movements, business activity and demand for water</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	<p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during further site investigation and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth</p>	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.

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		<p>abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the development, size and type.</p>		<p>requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW</p>	<p>Although it is acknowledged that there will be an increase in the demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment, the latest version of the HRA underlying the Core Strategy (April 2015) confirms that the roll out of Policy RA2 across the rural areas should not lead to adverse effects on the integrity of the River Wye SAC, provided the mitigation measures set out in the NMP are implemented</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at site allocation stage.</p>
ALM16:	Highway requirements	N/A	N/A	N/A	No, this policy will not directly lead to development but will help to protect the landscape and

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					<p>features through any development.</p> <p>Any development could have a possible increase in vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p>
ALM17:	Sewage and sewerage infrastructure	<p>Development needs to be tested before it commences.</p> <p>Housing, infrastructure development</p> <p>Possible loss of surface drainage capacity</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on the location and specifics of the development.</p>	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	<p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated at development stage but be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW and the impact this will have on flooding in the development areas and SAC.</p>	<p>No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p>

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ALM18:	Protection from flood risk	<p>Development needs to be tested before it commences.</p> <p>Housing, infrastructure development</p> <p>Possible loss of surface drainage capacity</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on the location and specifics of the development.</p>	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	<p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated at development stage but be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW and the impact this will have on flooding in the development areas and SAC.</p>	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.
ALM19:	Protection and enhancement of community facilities and services	<p>Possible new community facilities.</p> <p>Possible vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on the location</p>	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	<p>Policies LD2, SD1, SD3 and SD4 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and FW1 within the NDP will aim to help avoid any adverse impacts on the River Wye from new community uses.</p> <p>Whilst the Local Plan (Core Strategy) has yet to be adopted and cannot, therefore, be</p>	No, although this policy could result in the development of new community facilities or the loss of existing provision to new uses, which depending on location could have potential effect on the River Wye, sufficient policy safeguards are in

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		of the development.		<p>relied upon in too much detail, the implications of the Main Modifications to its policies, for the earlier HRA findings, are set out in an addendum report, prepared in April 2015 and published on the Council's website. This addendum report reveals that none of the changes proposed to the policies through the Main Modifications would affect the conclusions set out in the September 2014 HRA Report. It also makes clear that the roll out of the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) should avoid adverse effects.</p> <p>Improved water efficiency measures, metering and addressing leakages in the supply may help to mitigate any additional pressures on the water supply as a result of new development.</p>	<p>place within both the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and NDP policy to avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects on the River Wye.</p> <p>CIL is currently on hold.</p>
ALM20:	Contributions to community services, youth provision and	Possible new community facilities.	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	Policies LD2, SD1, SD3 and SD4 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and	No, although this policy could result in the development of

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	recreation facilities.	<p>Possible vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on the location of the development.</p>		<p>FW1 within the NDP will aim to help avoid any adverse impacts on the River Wye from new community uses.</p> <p>Whilst the Local Plan (Core Strategy) has yet to be adopted and cannot, therefore, be relied upon in too much detail, the implications of the Main Modifications to its policies, for the earlier HRA findings, are set out in an addendum report, prepared in April 2015 and published on the Council's website. This addendum report reveals that none of the changes proposed to the policies through the Main Modifications would affect the conclusions set out in the September 2014 HRA Report. It also makes clear that the roll out of the Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) should avoid adverse effects.</p> <p>Improved water efficiency measures, metering and addressing</p>	<p>new community facilities or the loss of existing provision to new uses, which depending on location could have potential effect on the River Wye, sufficient policy safeguards are in place within both the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and NDP policy to avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects on the River Wye.</p> <p>CIL is currently on hold.</p>
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				leakages in the supply may help to mitigate any additional pressures on the water supply as a result of new development.	
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Table 1a: HRA Screening of Neighbourhood Development Plan Proposed Site Allocations

Parish Council Name: Almeley

NDP Title: Almeley Parish NDP

Date undertaken: December 2017

Proposed Site Allocations	Characteristics of development, such as size <i>(Use the SEA Criteria in Appendix 2 point 1 of the internal user guide)</i>	Location of proposed site allocation <i>(Use the SEA Criteria in Appendix 2 point 2 of the internal user guide)</i>	HRA Screening of NDP Proposed Site Allocations			
			European Sites potentially affected <i>(Refer to Initial Screening)</i>	Likely effect if proposed site allocation is developed. Could the site result in LSE on European Sites?	Mitigation measures to be considered to avoid any impacts	If recommendations are implemented, would it be possible that it would result in no likely significant effect? (Yes/No with reasons)
ALM11:	<p>The development of a 0.6ha site.</p> <p>The construction new houses will involve use of timber, aggregates, metals and plastics.</p> <p>There would also be increased demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment.</p>	Land to north of West View	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No: the scale of development proposed would not give rise to likely significant effects	<p>There are sufficient safeguards within the Almeley NDP policy to avoid any adverse impacts.</p> <p>This site has been identified in direct response to the proportional growth target within Core Strategy policy and its development, either in isolation or</p>	No: The Local Plan (Core Strategy) confirms that the will not exceed the proportional growth target for the settlement, and the effects of this will not have a significant effect on the SAC.

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	<p>Pollution and nuisances: mainly from increased traffic, a potential exists from sewage arising.</p> <p>Housing will lead to increase in noise and light pollution than exists at present;</p>				in tandem with the other proposed site allocations, would not exceed the Local Plan's requirements.	
ALM13:	<p>Allocation of 0.55ha site for redevelopment of existing buildings in Woonton. The allocation of the site gives certainty to the impacts on the SAC.</p> <p>The construction new houses will involve use of timber, aggregates, metals and plastics.</p> <p>There would also be increased demand for water abstraction and sewage</p>	Redevelopment of land at Woonton Farm	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No: the scale of development proposed would not give rise to likely significant effects	N/A	No: The Local Plan (Core Strategy) confirms that the will not exceed the proportional growth target for the settlement, and the effects of this will not have a significant effect on the SAC.

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	<p>treatment.</p> <p>Pollution and nuisances: mainly from increased traffic, a potential exists from sewage arising.</p> <p>Housing will lead to increase in noise and light pollution than exists at present;</p> <p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>					
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Appendix 3

**Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental
Assessment Screening Notification**

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulation 2012 (Reg. 32)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)

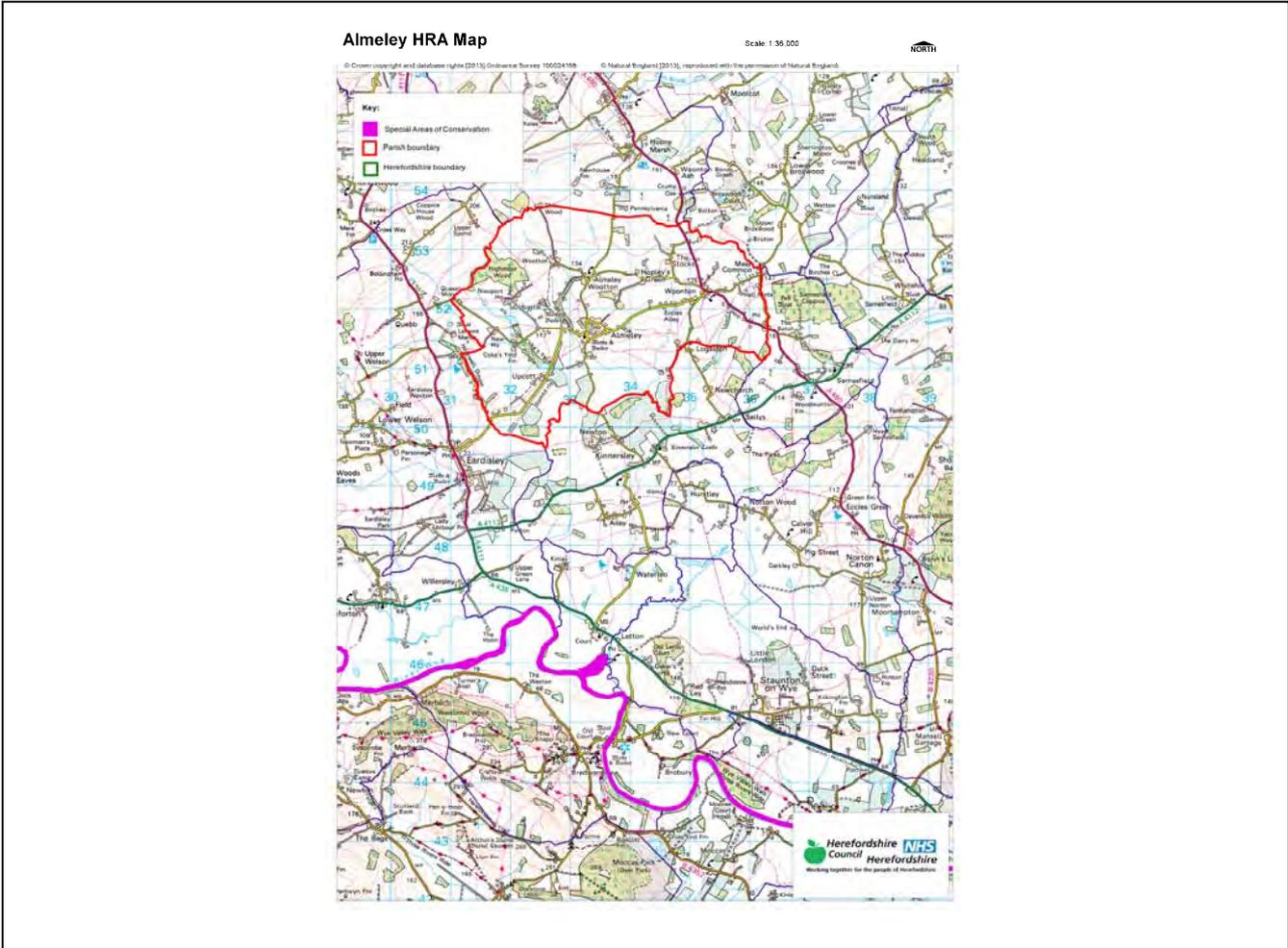
Neighbourhood Area:	Almeley Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council:	Almeley Parish Council
Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:	17/07/2012

Introduction

This Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening has been undertaken to assess whether any European sites exist within or in proximity to the neighbourhood area which could be affected by any future proposals or policies.

Through continual engagement the outcomes of any required assessments will help to ensure that proposed developments will not lead to Likely Significant Effects upon a European Site or cause adverse impacts upon other environmental assets, such as the built historic or local natural environment.

**HRA Initial Screening: Map showing relationship of Neighbourhood Area with European Sites
(not to scale)**



Initial HRA Screening

River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC:

Does the Neighbourhood Area have the River Wye (including the River Lugg) in or next to its boundary?	N	The River Wye is 2.75km away from the Parish
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC?	Y	The Parish is within the River Wye catchment area.
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	Y	There is mains drainage in Almeley

Downton Gorge SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	N	Downton Gorge is 21.3km away from the Parish
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River Clun SAC:

Does the Neighbourhood Area include: Border Group Parish Council or Leintwardine Group Parish Council?	N	River Clun does not border the Parish
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Usk Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of the SAC boundary?	N	Usk Bat Sites are 35.55km away from the Parish
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Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites?	N	The Parish is 43.02km away from Wye Valley and Forest of dean Bat Sites
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Wye Valley Woodlands SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley Woodlands Site?	N	The Parish is 40.22km away from the Wye Valley Woodlands
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HRA Conclusion:

The assessment above highlights that the following European Sites will need to be taken into account in the future Neighbourhood Development Plan for Almeley Neighbourhood Area and a Full HRA Screening will be required.

European Site

(List only those which are relevant from above)

River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC

Strategic Environmental Assessment Initial Screening for nature conservation landscape and heritage features

The following environmental features are within or in general proximity to the Almeley Neighbourhood Area and would need to be taken into account within a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition, the NDP will also need to consider the other SEA topics set out in Guidance Note 9a to ensure that the plan does not cause adverse impacts.

SEA features	Total	Explanation	SEA required
Air Quality Management Areas	0	There are no AQMA's within the Parish	N
Ancient Woodland	11	Highmoor Wood, Longclose Coppice, Pennsylvannia Wood, Buttington Wood, Rough Moors, Unlabelled plot of land by Holywell Dingle, Birches Coppice (border), Elsdon Wood (border), Coronation Wood (border), Highfield Wood (border), Bad Patch Wood (border)	Y
Areas of Archaeological Interest	0	There are no AAI's within the Parish	N
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	0	There are no AONB's within the Parish	N
Conservation Areas	1	There is a Conservation Area around Almeley village	Y
European Sites	0	There are No SAC's within the Parish	N
Flood Areas		Flood Zones 2 & 3 run in the south of the Parish, and also in Cokes Yeld Dingle and to the west of Almeley village	Y
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous listed buildings throughout the Parish	Y
Local Sites (SWS/SINCS/RIGS)	8	Highmoor Wood, Holywell Dingle, Pool nr Old Castle, pool nr Upcott, Hopleys Green Common, Land at Rose Cottage, The Batch, pool nr Shawl Farm	Y
Long distance footpaths/trails (e.g. Herefordshire Trail)	1	Vaughans Way	Y
Mineral Reserves	0	There are no Minerals Reserves Sites within the Parish	N
National Nature Reserve	0	There are no NNR's within the Parish	N
Registered & unregistered parks and gardens	2 registered 1 Unregistered	Registered: Nieuport, Broxwood Court (border) Unregistered: Lomore	Y
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	2	Oldcastle Twt, Almeley Castle	Y
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	0	There are no SSSI's within the Parish	N

Decision Notification:

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Almeley Neighbourhood Area:

- a) Will require further environmental assessment for Habitat Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Assessment date: 17/05/2013

Assessed by: James Latham

Appendix 1: European Sites

The table below provides the name of each European Site, which has been screened in for the purposes of neighbourhood planning in Herefordshire; includes their site features of integrity; and vulnerability data. This is based on the sites individual features of integrity and their vulnerabilities, which could include distance criteria. This has been used in identifying which parishes are likely to require a full HRA Screening of their future Neighbourhood Development Plan, to establish if their plan might have Likely Significant Effects on a European Site.

Downton Gorge
Site Features: <i>Tilio-Acerion</i> forests of slopes, screes and ravines
Vulnerability data: 10km for air quality associated with poultry units or other intensive agricultural practices.
River Clun
Site Features: Freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>
Vulnerability data: Water quality is important to maintain the site feature. Parishes either side of the River Clun will be affected.
River Wye
Site Features: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation. Transition mires and quaking bogs. White-clawed (or Atlantic Stream) crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> . Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> . Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> . River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> . Twaite shad <i>Alosa fallax</i> . Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> . Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i> . Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> . Allis shad <i>Alosa alosa</i>
Vulnerability data: Proximity: Developments should not be within 100m of the designated bank. Some developments beyond 100m may also have impacts based on proximity and these issues should be addressed where possible when developing NDP policy and choosing site allocations. Water Quality: Within the whole catchment of the River Wye, which includes the River Lugg, mains drainage issues with regards to water quality are being resolved through the Core Strategy / Local Plan and development of a Nutrient Management Plan. Welsh Water should be consulted to ensure that the proposed growth will be within the limit of their consents. Otters: "An otter will occupy a 'home range', which on fresh waters usually includes a stretch of river as well as associated tributary streams, ditches, ponds, lakes and woodland. The size of a home range depends largely on the availability of food and shelter, and the presence of neighbouring otters. On rivers, a male's home range may be up to 40km or more of watercourse and associated areas; females have smaller ranges (roughly half the size) and favour quieter locations for breeding, such as tributary streams. Otters without an established home range are known as 'transients'. They are mostly juveniles looking for a territory of their own, or adults that have been pushed out of their territories. Transient otters may use an area for a short while, but they will move on if conditions are not suitable or if they are driven away by resident otters. Transients will have been important in extending the range of otters, but they are very difficult to identify from field signs. Within a home range an otter may use many resting sites. These include above-ground shelters, such as stands of scrub or areas of rank grass, and underground 'holts' – for example, cavities under tree roots and dry drainage pipes." (Source: EA website: http://www.environmentagency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/Otters_the_facts.pdf accessed 09/04/2013)

Usk Bat Site

Site Features: Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection: European dry heaths, Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, Blanket bogs, Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation, Caves not open to the public, *Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines. Annex II species of primary reason for site selection: Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, UK population 5%, although it is suggested this is an underestimate.

Vulnerability data: Lesser Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 5km and 10km between their summer and winter roosts. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is vulnerable to disturbance; light pollution; and habitat loss. Check with the planning ecologist for other issues.

Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites

Site Features: Annex II species that are a primary reason for site selection: Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*. Greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*

Vulnerability data: Lesser Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 5km and 10km between their summer and winter roosts. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is vulnerable to disturbance; light pollution; and habitat loss. Check with the planning ecologist for other issues.

Greater Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 20-30km between their summer and winter roosts.

NDPs closest to the European Site will need to consider:
Woodland habitat buffer.

Lesser Horseshoe Bat: Old buildings; woodland locations; sheltered valleys, extensive deciduous woods or dense scrub, close to roost sites. In areas of fragmented habitats, linear habitats such as hedgerows are important corridors. Vulnerable to loss or disturbance of both summer and winter roosts and removal of linear habitat.

Greater Horseshoe Bat: Large buildings, pasture, edge of mixed deciduous woodland and hedgerows. Mixed land-use especially south-facing slopes, favours beetles, moths and insects they feed on. During the winter they depend on caves, abandoned mines and other underground sites for undisturbed hibernation. A system/series of sites required. Vulnerable to loss of insect food supply, due to insecticide use, changing farming practices and loss of broad-leaved tree-cover and loss / disturbance of underground roosts sites.

Wye Valley Woodlands

Site Features: Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for site selection: Beech forests *Asperulo-Fagetum*, *Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines, *Taxus baccata* woods of the British Isles. Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection: Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, 51-100 residents

Vulnerability data: Lesser Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 5km and 10km between their summer and winter roosts. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is vulnerable to disturbance; light pollution; and habitat loss. Check with the planning ecologist for other issues. NDPs closest to the European Site will need to consider: Woodland habitat buffer. Lesser Horseshoe Bat: Old buildings; woodland locations; sheltered valleys, extensive deciduous woods or dense scrub, close to roost sites. In areas of fragmented habitats, linear habitats such as hedgerows are important corridors. Vulnerable to loss or disturbance of both summer and winter roosts and removal of linear habitat.

Appendix 2: Wye Catchment Map

