

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Final Report for:

Almeley Neighbourhood Area

August 2018



Almeley Neighbourhood Plan HRA

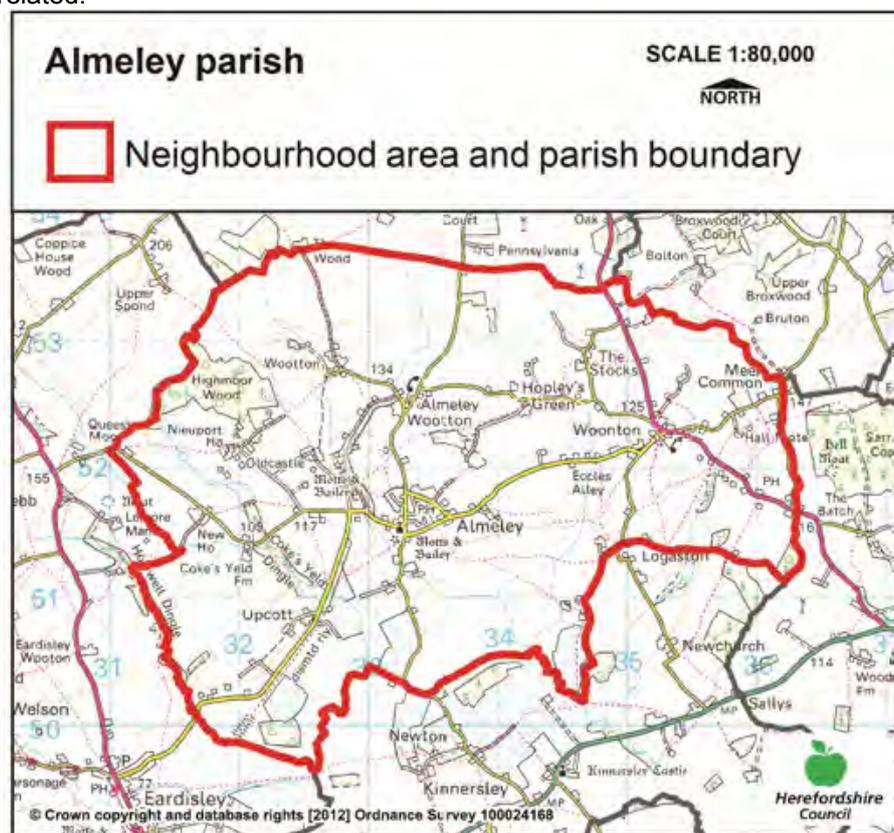
HRA Screening Assessment

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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 final Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).
- 1.2 Almeley Parish Council has produced a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Almeley of parishes, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the Parish up to 2031. This HRA reviews the final Almeley Plan (May 2018).
- 1.3 The NDP is made up of a set of criteria based policies and allocates two sites. Settlement boundaries have been designated in Almeley. The general criteria policies that clarify and give more detail to those within the Herefordshire Core Strategy.
- 1.4 This requires a high level screening assessment to build upon the HRA Screening Assessment Report for the Core Strategy. It should be read in combination with the Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment Report and ensures that there will not be any significant impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.5 The map below shows Almeley Neighbourhood Area to which this assessment related.



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.
- 2.5 Herefordshire Council is aware of the recent judgement (People over Wind, Peter Sweetman vs Coillte). The Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) ruled that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive must be interpreted as meaning that mitigation measures should be assessed within the framework of an appropriate assessment and that it is not permissible to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan on a European site at the screening stage. The initial screening undertaken in May 2016 and concluded that a full HRA would be required. Mitigation was not taken into account at this stage.
- 2.6 The purpose of this final HRA 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 (January 2018 and June 2018) and reviewed in terms of the implications of *Sweetman*.
- ### 3 Methodology
- 3.1 Although the Almeley NDP is not directly regarding the management of any European sites, it does include proposals for development which may affect European sites. Therefore, 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. 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 addressed.

4 Results of the Initial Screening Report and qualifying features of the European Sites

- 4.1 The initial Screening report (October 2014) found that Almeley Parish is within the River Wye (including the River Lugg) and the Group Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Wye. Figure 2 below highlights the location of River Wye SAC in relation to the neighbourhood area.



- 4.2 There is also a duty under the Water Framework Directive to ensure that proposals for growth do not adversely affect the river water quality and this included the associated watercourses flowing into the rivers.

Site integrity of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC

- 4.3 The issues associated with maintaining the sites integrity include water levels and flow, water quality, eutrophication (nitrogen enrichment), sedimentation, disturbance and species maintenance.
- 4.4 The River Wye SAC can be sensitive to changes in water quantity and quality. As outlined within the Habitat Regulation Assessment to the Herefordshire Core Strategy, the water supply in this area comes from Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) and no likely significant effects on European sites as a result of changes in water quality are expected in relation to the proportional growth outlined with the Herefordshire Core Strategy.
- 4.5 In relation to water quality, Policy SD4 of the Herefordshire Core Strategy indicates that any development should not undermine the achievement of water quality targets within the county's rivers. This should ensure that developments within the area can be accommodated within existing water discharge permits would not be likely to have a significant effect upon the River Wye SAC. This position is confirmed within the HRA of the Core Strategy in April 2015.
- 4.6 The addition of the Nutrient Management Plan for the River Wye SAC will support this policy. DCWW states that there is available headroom at present in the Eardisley WWTW to accommodate the specific growth required within Almeley Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.7 For full details of the River Wye's attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Almeley Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, October 2014, can be found in Appendix 1 of this HRA report.
- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 The initial screening assessment indicated that a full screening assessment is required to assessment the likelihood of significant effects on the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC of the policies within the Almeley NDP.

5 Description of the Almeley Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 5.1 The final Almeley NDP presents detailed policies for development in the Neighbourhood Area, which is equivalent to the group parish boundary, up to 2031. The Plan begins by introducing its preparation and highlighting its issues.
- 5.2 The NDP then details the vision for the Group Parish over the Plan period:

"In 2031, Almeley Parish will remain an unspoilt, rural and scenic part of Herefordshire, providing homes for its families and elderly residents, supporting local businesses, such as small family farms, and an increase in home working through a fast-broadband network."

There are 3 objectives of how this will be achieved. The objectives cover the following topics:

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.

From these 5 objectives details have been included to further development the overall objectives into specific policies areas, 20 policies in total.

- 5.3 The initial options for the NDP (refer to appendix 2) were assessed to determine their environmental impact that could affect the River Wye SAC. Of the 7 options put forward the 'no NDP / do nothing' (option 7) was not considered viable for the Parish.

The remaining 6 options were:

Option 1	This option would see a 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.

All of the remaining options indicated towards growth however all the options would be seeking to provide proportional growth in line with the Core strategy and are therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the SAC

- 5.4 As Almeley Neighbourhood Plan progressed from options to draft NDP policies, the Plan needed 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 previous HRA assessments, and the Assessment matrix for the options can be found HRA January 2018 version.
- 5.5 The NDP also sets out 20 general policies on various topics based on the objective headings above and also for parish, which also allocate two sites, these include:

ALM1:	Promoting sustainable development.
ALM2:	Development Strategy guiding development, site allocations and settlement boundaries.
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: SITE	The development of a 0.6ha site.
ALM12:	Housing development in Woonton
ALM13: SITE	Allocation of 0.55ha site for redevelopment of existing buildings in Woonton.
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.

6.0 Assessments undertaken to date of the emerging Almeley NDP policies

- 6.1 Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations 2010 requires that a Screening Assessment be undertaken, in order to identify the 'likely significant effects' of an NDP. Accordingly, a screening matrix was prepared and this determined the extent to which any of the policies within the Almeley NDP would be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. This has been repeated at each statutory stage of the NDP consultation process.
- 6.2 The findings of those screening matrix can be found within the previous versions of the HRA report and its addendum. This final report aims to bring together these assessments and review in light of the final examination modifications and the implications of the *Sweetman* case.

Screening of the draft plan (Reg14)

- 6.3 The screening matrix took the approach of screening each policy and objective 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.
- 6.4 None of the Almeley NDP objectives and policies (Jan 2018) were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the European site. Although the parish is within the River Wye SAC, Policy ALM17 and ALM18 alongside Core Strategy policy SD3 and SD4 together with the Nutrient Management Plan will ensure that development can only occur if these policy requirements are met.
- 6.5 In many cases this is because the policies themselves would not result in development, i.e. they related instead to criteria for development and in several cases

the policies also included measures to help support the natural environment including biodiversity.

- 6.6 It is unlikely that the Almeley Neighbourhood Plan will have any in-combination effects with any Plans from neighbouring parish council due to the level of growth proposed is of the same that is proposed for the Kington Housing Market Area in the Herefordshire Core Strategy
- 6.7 Therefore it was concluded that the **Reg14 Almeley NDP would not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC.**

Screening of modifications to NDP (Reg16)

- 6.8 The Submission NDP (June 2018) incorporates additional policy criteria or wording to add clarity and emphasis throughout the document.
- 6.9 Modifications made to policies by the inclusion of additional criteria and amendments to Policy ALM9 and ALM19 are not considered to affect the findings of the previous HRA report. On the contrary; they strengthen the likelihood of there being no adverse impacts.
- 6.10 The revised NDP policies are therefore unlikely to result in significant effects on the European site.
- 6.11 In light of the *Sweetman* case all policies have been reviewed to ensure compliance with the ruling. The finding can be found in appendix 3.
- 6.12 The findings of the screening matrix can be found in the Screening Matrix in the appendix. 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

- 7.5 Following the recent *Sweetman* judgement, it is not permissible to take account of measure intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan on the River Wye SAC at this final screening stage. Any likely significant effects would require an Appropriate Assessment to be required.

8 Conclusions from the Screening Matrix

- 8.1 None of the final Almeley Neighbourhood Plan (June 2018) policies were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC.
- 8.2 Policies ALM17 and ALM18 have been included within the Almeley NDP with sufficient policy criteria together with the Core Strategy policy SD3 and SD4 to ensure that development can only occur if these criteria are met.
- 8.3 The Almeley NDP has a set of criteria based policies within the plan and 2 site allocations. The majority of the policies themselves would not result in development, but include criteria to support the natural environment, including biodiversity and therefore no significant effect conclusion could be reached.
- 8.4 Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) has stated for the Core Strategy that there is currently sufficient 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.

- 8.5 Policy SD4 of the Core Strategy indicates that development would not be permitted if wastewater treatment and water quality cannot be assured.
- 8.6 In addition, 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.
- 8.7 No mitigation measures have been included within the screening of the policies of the NDP. Policies of the Core Strategy and the NDP will form part of the development plans. A key requirement of the Core Strategy is to meet the Water Framework Directive.
- 8.6 This review and rescreening in addition to the revisions to the policies from the examination, have been found to be unlikely to result in significant effects on the River Wye SAC. ***It is therefore concluded that the Almeley Plan will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC.***

9 Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects

- 1.1 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 publication of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment (Oct 2015).
- 1.2 It is seen that as this NDP does not go over and beyond the requirements set out in the Core Strategy.
- 1.3 Adjacent neighbourhood plans include Lyonshall, Pembridge, Eardisley, Kinnersley and Sarnsfield. Eardisley Group has been adopted, Pembridge has completed Reg 16, Lyonshall is soon approaching Reg 14 and Kinnersley and Sarnsfield are not currently preparing a plan. These plans have not gone over and beyond the requirements set out within the Core Strategy for their area.
- 9.4 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.
- 9.5 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 Kington Housing Market Area in the Herefordshire Core Strategy.

10.0 Conclusion

- 10.1 With reference to sections 6 to 9 above, the modifications to the NDP are not considered to affect the findings of the previous HRA report. Equally the review in light of the *Sweetman* case are also not considered to affect the previous findings.
- 10.2 Therefore the earlier conclusions that the **Almeley NDP will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC** remains valid.

11.0 Next steps

- 11.1 This final Report will be published alongside the final Almeley NDP and the earlier HRA Report and its addendum. This will now be subject to examination and the final adoption/making of the Almeley NDP.

Appendix 1

**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: Lemore	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.

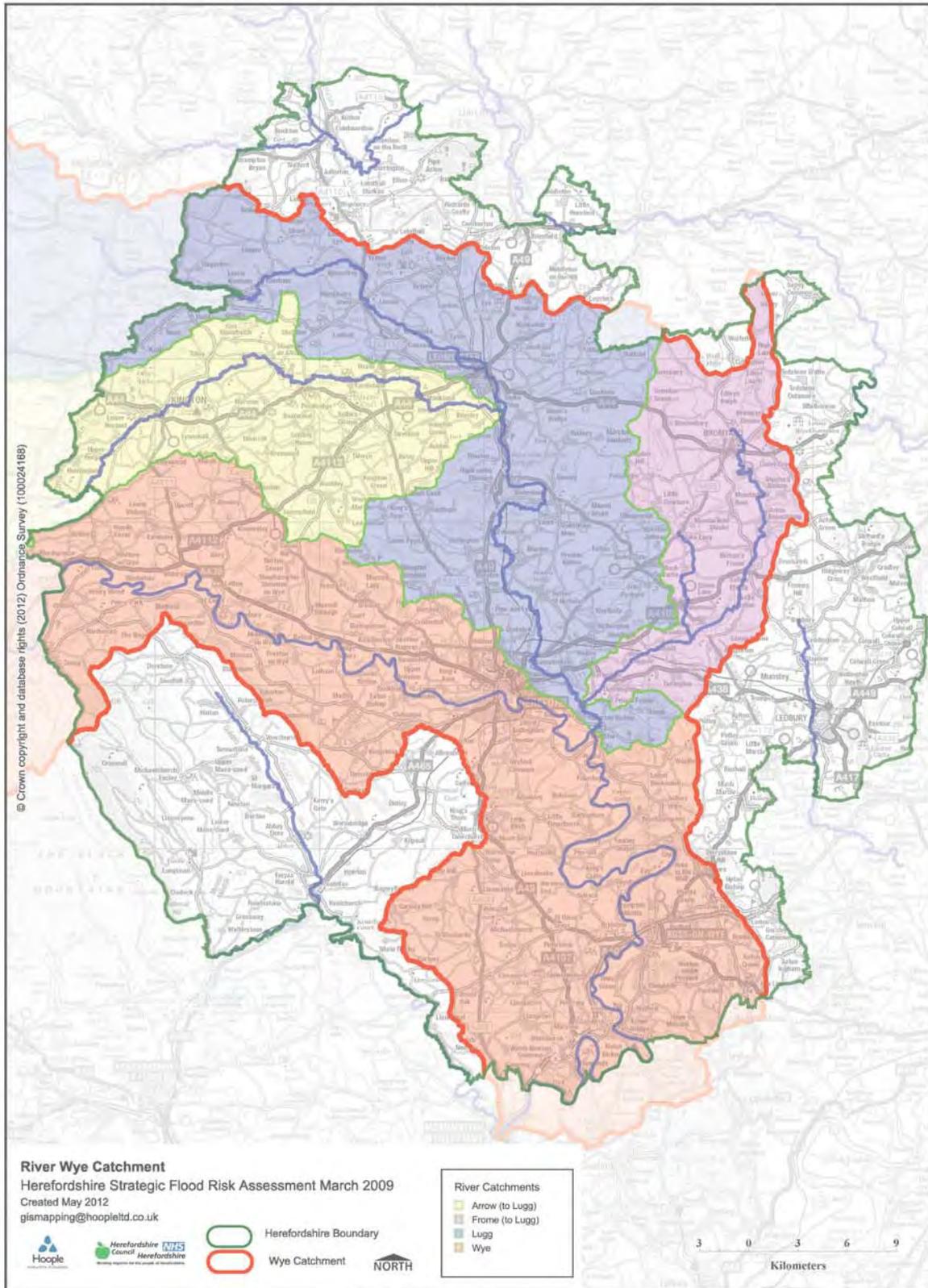
Greater Horseshoe Bat: Large buildings, pasture, edge of mixed deciduous woodland and hedgerows. Mixed land-use especially south-facing slopes, favours beetles, moths and insects they feed on. During the winter they depend on caves, abandoned mines and other underground sites for undisturbed hibernation. 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



Appendix 2

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 3

HRA Screening of final Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies**Parish: Almeley****Date undertaken: August 2018**

NDP objectives and policies	HRA Screening of final NDP objectives and policies				
	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the objective/option/policy	Likely effect if option implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites?	European Sites potentially affected	Would it be possible that it would result in any LSE?	Requirement for an Appropriate Assessment
OBJECTIVES					
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 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	Maintaining the character of the parish and conserving open spaces are unlikely to have any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4 which seeks to ensure water quality of the SAC is not detrimentally effected.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this objective itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective. This policy safeguards natural and built landscape.

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	policy wording.				
Objective 2	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.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
Objective 3	Supporting the rural economy within the parish, enabling diversification of businesses, supporting home working and live work units as well as protecting high quality land.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4 which seeks to ensure water quality of the SAC is not detrimentally effected.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
Objective 4	Providing housing opportunities for existing and future residents of the parish, including affordable and self-build units, while ensuring that the housing meets the	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning

	strategic requirements of the Core Strategy, as well as being designed to a high standard of design and sustainability credentials.	which seeks to ensure water quality of the SAC is not detrimentally effected.			permission.
Objective 5	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.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4 which seeks to ensure water quality of the SAC is not detrimentally effected.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be meet for the development to receive planning permission.
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. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be meet for the development to receive planning permission.

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, however a windfall approach would not suffice to demonstrate that the housing requirement could be met. However it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
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. Allocation of sites for housing would give certainty to future development. It unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.

		developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4.			
Option 4	Extend Almeley settlement boundary to incorporate a site large enough for affordable housing and limited further development in Woonton.	Pursuing this option would give certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment. However the majority of the village where proportional growth and the settlement boundary are likely to be located are away from directly impacting the SAC. It is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
Option 5	Retain current settlement boundary for Almeley village, while allowing limited development in Woonton. Increase in vehicle traffic. Increased demand for	The settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.

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	water abstraction and sewage treatment.				
Option 6	<p>Small extension to Almeley village settlement boundary with limited further development in Woonton.</p> <p>Increase in vehicle traffic.</p> <p>Increased demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment.</p>	The settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
Option 7	<p>Not producing a neighbourhood plan would result in any future 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>	It is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. All developments are required to meet the criteria of Policy SD4.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
POLICIES					

ALM1:	Promoting sustainable development.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Policy seeks to support sustainable measures for new development.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective.
ALM2:	Development Strategy guiding development, site allocations and settlement boundaries.	Development would be proposed, but it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
ALM3:	Maintaining and protecting the landscape and its features	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective. This policy safeguards the landscape.
ALM4:	Protecting heritage assets	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective. This policy safeguards heritage assets.
ALM5:	Protection of local green space	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective. This policy safeguards

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					open spaces.
ALM6:	Design Appearance	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective focusing on design.
ALM7:	Sustainable design	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective focusing on sustainable design.
ALM8:	Diversification through live/work units	Development would be proposed, but it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
ALM9:	General purpose agricultural buildings and intensive livestock units	Development would be proposed, but it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
ALM10:	Housing development in Almeley	Development would be proposed, but it is unlikely that there will be any	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for

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		significant effects on the European Site.			the development to receive planning permission.
ALM11: SITE	<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> <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>	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will lead to development, but will guide the scale and extent of any development and ensure that any development that comes forward is in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and Core Strategy (SD4, SD3 and LD1)) required to be meet for any development to receive planning permission.
ALM12:	Housing development in Woonton	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, but will guide the scale and extent of any development and ensure that any

					development that comes forward is in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for any development to receive planning permission.
ALM13: SITE	<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 treatment.</p> <p>Pollution and nuisances: mainly from increased traffic, a potential exists from sewage arising.</p> <p>Housing will lead to</p>	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will lead to development, but will guide the scale and extent of any development and ensure that any development that comes forward is in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and Core Strategy (SD4, SD3 and LD1)) required to be met for any development to receive planning permission.

	increase in noise and light pollution than exists at present;				
ALM14:	Residential use associated with historic farmsteads	Development would be proposed, but it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
ALM15:	Providing for local housing need	Development would be proposed, but it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No, policy criteria exist within the NDP and Core Strategy (SD4) required to be met for the development to receive planning permission.
ALM16:	Highway requirements	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria based objective focusing on sustainable design.
ALM17:	Sewage and sewerage infrastructure	The policy contains criteria to specifically safeguard the River Wye SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: This policy is likely to have a beneficial effect on environment and biodiversity. This policy is specifically intended to highlight criteria for

					developments to meet and compliment policy SD4.
ALM18:	Protection from flood risk	The policy contains criteria to specifically safeguard the River Wye SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: This policy is likely to have a beneficial effect on environment and biodiversity. This policy is specifically intended to highlight criteria for developments to meet and compliment policy SD4.
ALM19:	Protection and enhancement of community facilities and services	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria regarding the protection of community facilities. .
ALM20:	Contributions to community services, youth provision and recreation facilities.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	No	No: this policy itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to criteria regarding the protection of community facilities. .

Appendix 4

HRA Consultation Feedback

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

Parish Council Name: Almeley

Neighbourhood Development Plan Name: Almeley NDP

Details of consultation: *Regulation 14 Draft Plan consultation*

Consultation date: 19 February 2018 – 29 March 2018

Response Date	Consultee	Summary of Comments	Response to Comments
9/4/18	Natural England	Notes the screening process applied to this Neighbourhood plan. We agree with the Council's conclusion of no likely significant effect upon the named European designated sites: <input type="checkbox"/> River Wye SAC	N/A

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Appendix 5

HRA Consultation Feedback

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

Parish Council Name: Almeley

Neighbourhood Development Plan Name: Almeley NDP

Details of consultation: *Regulation 16 Consultation*

Consultation date: 27 June 2018 to 22 August 2018

Response Date	Consultee	Summary of Comments	Response to Comments

No Comments received