

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Report for:

Weobley Neighbourhood Area

May 2018



Weobley HRA

HRA Screening Assessment

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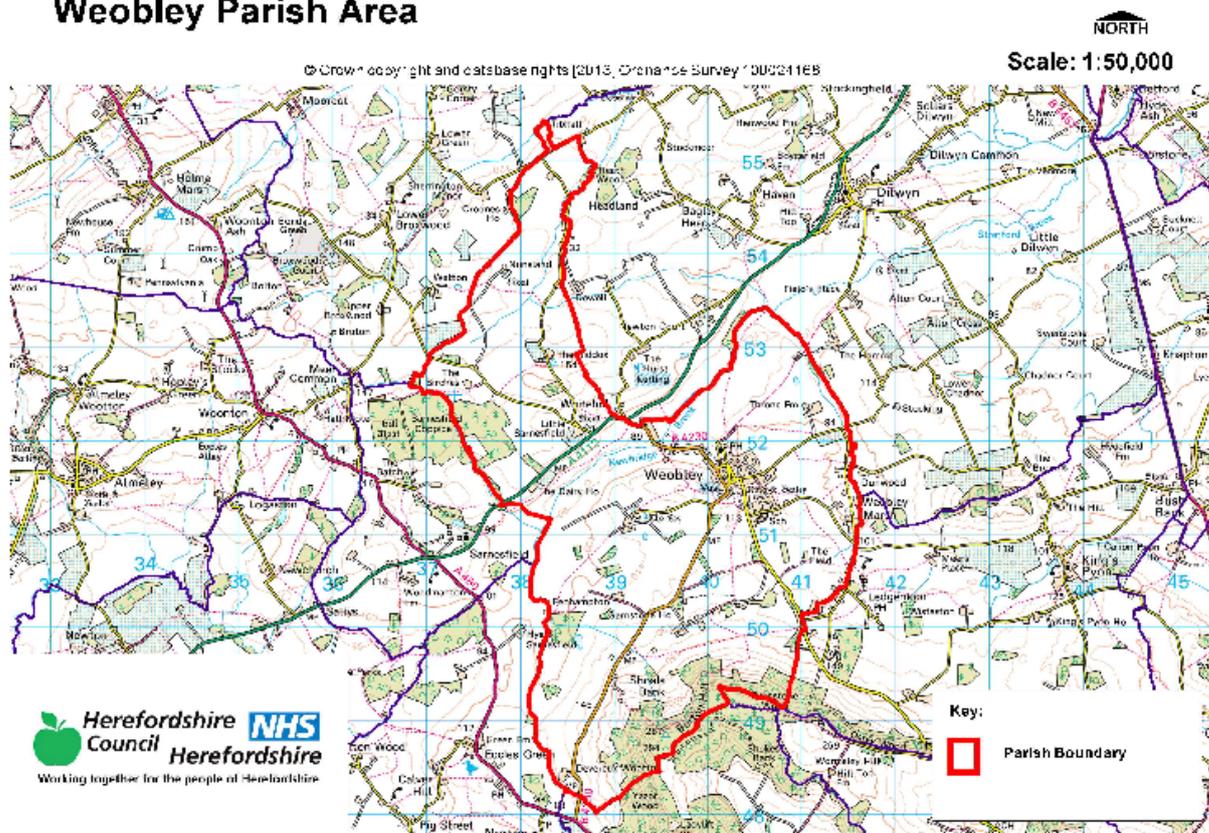
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1 Introduction

- 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 Weobley Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Weobley 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 Weobley Neighbourhood Plan April 2018.
- 1.3 The NDP has 23 criteria based 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 Weobley Neighbourhood Area with the European Site highlighted.

Weobley Parish Area



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, Weobley 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 Weobley 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 (**08/07/2013**) found that the Neighbourhood Area is in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC. 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 Weobley Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, **08/07/2013**, 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 Weobley 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 5 options put forward the no NDP option was not considered viable for the Parish. The remaining options didn't directly prose growth, however any additional infill 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 Weobley 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 Weobley Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 5.1 The Draft Weobley 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 Parish over the Plan period and 5 objectives of how this will be achieved. The objectives are as follow:

1. Community Facilities:

- To maintain the current level of community facilities and amenities and enhance these to meet the needs of the increased population resulting from new housing that will be built.
- To protect public open space and local green spaces within the parish.
- To support local health provision, including through promoting a healthy lifestyle.
- To support local businesses that provide important community services such public houses, shops and catering establishments.
- To improve communication and connectivity to parishioners to promote greater community involvement.

2. Local Environment:

- To safeguard Weobley Conservation Area and other historic features.
- To protect and enhance biodiversity.

- To preserve the landscape and associated features
- To ensure the capacity of the sewage treatment works is sufficient for the level of development.
- To protect development from flooding and pollution.

3. New Housing:

- To define a settlement boundary for the village that would enable individual/small infill plots to be found to meet the outstanding requirement.
- To meet a wide range of housing needs including starter homes for young people; family homes; retirement homes and easy access such as bungalows; homes for local people, people with local connections, homes linked to work location; and self-build homes.
- To achieve high quality building design and landscaping, including vernacular or contemporary buildings, but reflecting our unique local distinctiveness and incorporating sustainable design features.

4. Economic Development and Employment:

- To retain Whitehill Park Industrial Estate as employment land seeking some redevelopment of parts where this may enhance its use and enabling opportunities for this area to expand subject to environmental and other safeguards.
 - To promote the conversion of rural buildings for employment use and enable business diversification, in particular in agricultural.
 - To promote working from home and small craft-style workshops where residential amenity can be protected.
 - To support the village's commercial centre through making it more pleasant for pedestrians through enhancements, tackling congestion and parking and improving pavements.
- Weobley Neighbourhood Plan – Draft V6 Page 20

5. Traffic and Roads:

- To reduce speed of traffic within the village.
- To reduce unnecessary on-street parking and improve off-street parking to serve the village centre and other facilities.
- To ensure pedestrian safety.
- To press for higher standards of highway maintenance and the avoidance of flooding of roads.

5.3 The NDP also sets out 23 policies on various topics based on the objective headings above and also for the villages, these include:

Policy WEO1: Promoting Sustainable Development

Policy WEO2: Protection and Enhancement of Community Facilities and Services

Policy WEO3: Protection of Local Green Space

Policy WEO4: Protection of Amenity Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities

Policy WEO5: Sewerage and Sewage Treatment Infrastructure

Policy WEO6: Contributions to Community Facilities

Policy WEO7: Protecting Heritage Assets

Policy WEO8: Development within Weobley Conservation Area

Policy WEO9: Conserving the Landscape and Scenic Beauty of the Parish

Policy WEO10: Enhancement of the Natural Environment

Policy WEO11: Storm Water Drainage

Policy WEO12: Sustainable Design

Policy WEO13 Design and Appearance - Buildings outside Weobley Conservation Area

Policy WEO14: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Policy WEO15: Housing Development in Weobley Village

Policy WEO16: Housing Sites in Weobley Village

Policy WEO17: Meeting Housing Needs

Policy WEO18: Affordable and Intermediate Homes

Policy WEO19: Whitehill Park Industrial Estate

Policy WEO20: Weobley Village Centre

Policy WEO21: Working from Home

Policy WEO22: Traffic Measures within the Parish

Policy WEO23: Highway Design Requirements

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 Weobley 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 have been clearly identified and 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 Weobley Neighbourhood Plan (April 2018) policies were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. Based on assumptions and information contained within the Weobley 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.
- 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 commitment sites are included within the policies.
- 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 Weobley 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 Weobley 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 Weobley 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 April 2018) will be rescreened if required and an addendum to this report will be produced.

Appendix 1

Appendix 1 – Weobley HRA (Reg 14)

Options Considered

May 2018

<p>Option 1 – retaining those housing sites that currently have planning permission and providing for the limited outstanding requirement through windfall development within a settlement boundary, and through development outside of the village through Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy RA3.</p>
<p>Option 2 – retaining those housing sites that currently have planning permission and providing for the limited outstanding requirement through identifying a further small site.</p>
<p>Option 3 – providing for further housing development beyond the level of growth required by Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy through additional small developments.</p>
<p>Option 4 – providing for further housing development beyond the level of growth required by Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy through identifying land for a further relatively large site.</p>
<p>Option 5 - Not to prepare a NDP but to support developer led housing proposals until such a time as Herefordshire Council adopts its Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document.</p>

Appendix 2

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

Parish Council Name: Weobley

NDP Title: Weobley NDP

Date undertaken: May 2018

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	To maintain the current level of community facilities and amenities and enhance these to meet the needs of the increased population resulting from new	This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and preservation of the character and history of the parish and community facilities. This objective	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>housing that will be built.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To protect public open space and local green spaces within the parish. <input type="checkbox"/> To support local health provision, including through promoting a healthy lifestyle. <input type="checkbox"/> To support local businesses that provide important community services such public houses, shops and catering establishments. <input type="checkbox"/> To improve communication and connectivity to parishioners to promote greater community involvement. Protection and management of the high-quality landscape, green space, biodiversity and geology of the Parish and the settings of its settlements. <p>Maintaining the rural character of the parish would ensure that the landscape character, views and features of the parish would be</p>	<p>would lead to development in line with commitment sites but 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>			
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	preserved and open spaces. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.				
Objective 2	<p>Environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To safeguard Weobley Conservation Area and other historic features. <input type="checkbox"/> To protect and enhance biodiversity. <input type="checkbox"/> To preserve the landscape and associated features <input type="checkbox"/> To ensure the capacity of the sewage treatment works is sufficient for the level of development. <input type="checkbox"/> To protect development from flooding and pollution. <p>Maintaining the rural character of the parish would ensure that the landscape character, views and features of the parish would 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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	preserved and open spaces. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.				
Objective 3	<p>New Housing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To define a settlement boundary for the village that would enable individual/small infill plots to be found to meet the outstanding requirement. <input type="checkbox"/> To meet a wide range of housing needs including starter homes for young people; family homes; retirement homes and easy access such as bungalows; homes for local people, people with local connections, homes linked to work location; and self-build homes. <input type="checkbox"/> To achieve high quality building design and landscaping, including vernacular or contemporary buildings, but reflecting our unique 	<p>This objective would give certainty over the character of the parish, it would lead 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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	<p>local distinctiveness and incorporating sustainable design features.</p> <p>Maintaining the rural character of the parish would ensure that the landscape character, views and features of the parish would be preserved and open spaces. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>				
Objective 4	<p>Economic Development and Employment:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To retain Whitehill Park Industrial Estate as employment land seeking some redevelopment of parts where this may enhance</p>	<p>This objective would give certainty over the future conservation and preservation of the character and history and economic development of the parish, it would not lead directly to development but possible extension to existing</p>	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation site as an outcome to this objective to mitigate the impact.</p>

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	<p>its use and enabling opportunities for this area to expand subject to environmental and other safeguards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To promote the conversion of rural buildings for employment use and enable business diversification, in particular in agricultural. <input type="checkbox"/> To promote working from home and small craft-style workshops where residential amenity can be protected. <input type="checkbox"/> To support the village's commercial centre through making it more pleasant for pedestrians through enhancements, tackling congestion and parking and improving pavements. <p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p>	<p>business premises, 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>			
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Objective 5	<p>. Traffic and Roads:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> To reduce speed of traffic within the village. <input type="checkbox"/> To reduce unnecessary on-street parking and improve off-street parking to serve the village centre and other facilities. <input type="checkbox"/> To ensure pedestrian safety. <input type="checkbox"/> To press for higher standards of highway maintenance and the avoidance of flooding of roads. <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 traffic management in the parish. It will not lead directly to development but there is unlikely to 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	Retaining those housing sites that currently have planning permission and providing for the limited outstanding requirement through windfall		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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	development within a settlement boundary, and through development outside of the village through Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy policy RA3.				
Option 2	Retaining those housing sites that currently have planning permission and providing for the limited outstanding requirement through identifying a further small site.	<p>This option looks to continue with commitment sits and a small allocated site.</p> <p>Pursuing this option would give certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment but would work towards mitigating impact on the SAC.</p> <p>If required mitigation criteria can be added to commitment site policies.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation of sites policy to mitigate.
Option 3	Providing for further housing development beyond the level of growth required by Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy through additional small	<p>This option looks to continue with commitment sits and a small allocated site.</p> <p>Pursuing this option would give certainty over future development within the area particularly within</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.

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	developments.	the River Wye catchment but would work towards mitigating impact on the SAC. If required mitigation criteria can be added to commitment site policies			
Option 4	Providing for further housing development beyond the level of growth required by Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy through identifying land for a further relatively large site.	This option looks to continue with commitment sits and a large site. Pursuing this option would give certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment but would work towards mitigating impact on the SAC. If required mitigation criteria can be added to commitment site policies	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.
Option 5	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. Proportional housing and	Core Strategy HRA has examined the likely significant effects of the 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	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A

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	employment growth would be in accordance with the Core Strategy.	certainty.			
POLICIES					
Policy WEO1:	To deliver sustainable development across any housing on pre allocated sites and further windfall dwellings.	<p>This policy will not lead directly to development but will guide sustainable measures of development on already approved houses on pre-approved sites and windfall.</p> <p>Any development could have a possible increase in vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC as this will have been addressed at planning stage.</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: this policy seeks to include of sustainable development measures within any residential schemes but does not directly lead to development itself.
Policy WEO2:	Protection and Enhancement of Community Facilities and Services	<p>This policy will not directly lead to development but will protect and enhance any future development of community facilities in the area.</p> <p>Any form of development could have a possible increase in vehicular</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No: this policy seeks to maintain and protect community facilities and its features but does not directly lead to development itself.

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		<p>movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p> <p>There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC.</p>			
Policy WEO3:	Protection of Local Green Space	<p>This policy will not directly lead to development but will guide any future development.</p> <p>There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO4:	Protection of Amenity Open Space, Sports and Recreation Facilities	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO5:	Sewerage and Sewage Treatment Infrastructure	<p>No foreseen impact on the River Wye SAC as this is a policy which aims to deal with sewerage in the correct way.</p> <p>There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC.</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>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be</p>

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					undertaken at site allocation stage.
Policy WEO6:	Contributions to Community Facilities	Possible development of community facilities from contributions. There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO7:	Protecting Heritage Assets	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No: this policy seeks to protect landscape and scenic beauty in the parish but does not directly lead to development itself.
Policy WEO8:	Development within Weobley Conservation Area	The policy could lead to some infrastructure and or environmental impacts as a result of increased activity but this policy will not directly lead to development but will guide it within the conservation area. There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No: this policy seeks to protect landscape and scenic beauty in the parish but does not directly lead to development itself.
Policy WEO9:	Conserving the Landscape and Scenic Beauty of the Parish	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No: this policy seeks to protect landscape and scenic beauty in the parish but does not directly lead to

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					development itself.
Policy WEO10:	Enhancement of the Natural Environment	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO11:	Storm Water Drainage	<p>No foreseen impact on the River Wye SAC as this is a policy which aims to deal with drainage.</p> <p>There is unlikely to be an impact on the SAC if positively managed in line with policy.</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 run off areas.</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>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at site allocation stage.</p>
Policy WEO12:	Sustainable Design	<p>New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts as a result of increased activity.</p> <p>No likely impact on the</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	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

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		River Wye SAC.			environmental issues.
Policy WEO13	Design and Appearance - Buildings outside Weobley Conservation Area	New development would lead to some infrastructure and or environmental impacts as a result of increased activity but this policy will not directly lead to development but will guide it outside of the conservation area. No likely impact on the River Wye SAC.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate.
Policy WEO14:	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	Any development could have a possible increase in vehicular movements.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No, this policy will not directly lead to development but will help to protect the landscape and features through any development and enhance the provision for renewable energy.
Policy WEO15:	Housing Development in Weobley Village	Development needs to be tested before it commences. Housing, infrastructure development Possible loss of surface	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Specific environmental issues could be investigated at development stage but be positively addressed within the policy wording.	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards (SS7 and SD3) which exist within

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		<p>drainage capacity</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>.</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>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>the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p>
Policy WEO16:	Housing Sites in Weobley Village	<p>Development needs to be tested before it commences.</p> <p>Housing, infrastructure development</p> <p>Possible loss of surface drainage capacity</p>	River Wye (including 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</p>	<p>No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards (SS7 and SD3) which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or</p>

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		Uncertain as to the impact on the River Wye SAC as dependant on specific location of the development, size and type.		<p>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>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>mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>This will be mitigate through detail at planning stages.</p>
Policy WEO17:	Meeting Housing Needs	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO18:	Affordable and Intermediate Homes	New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts of as a result of direct development in the parish.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Specific environmental issues could be investigated during further site investigation and be positively addressed within the	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) policy RA2 and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should

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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>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>avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at site allocation stage.</p>
Policy WEO19:	Whitehill Park Industrial Estate	<p>New development of infrastructure and or environmental impacts as a result of increased 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>Policies LD2, SD1, SD3 and SD4 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and policies within the NDP will aim to help avoid any adverse impacts on the River Wye from any new employment or business uses.</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>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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Policy WEO20:	Weobley Village Centre	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO21:	Working from Home	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO22:	Traffic Measures within the Parish	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A
Policy WEO23:	Highway Design Requirements	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	N/A

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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)**

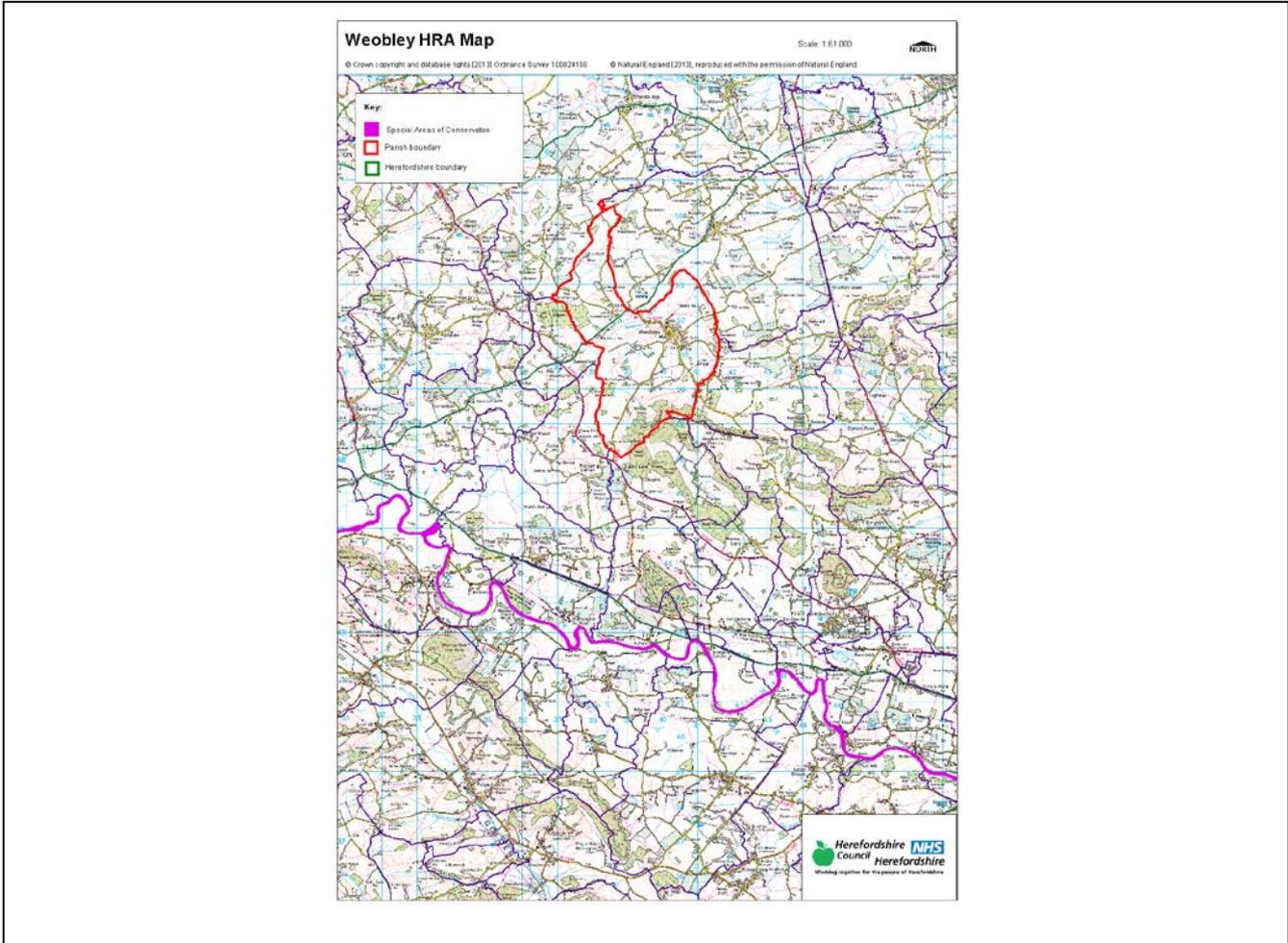
Neighbourhood Area:	Weobley Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council:	Weobley Parish Council
Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:	8 th August 2013

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 and Lugg SAC is 5.3km 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 Arrow (to Lugg) hydrological catchment area
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	Y	There is mains drainage at Weobley

Downton Gorge SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	N	Downton Gorge is 18.1km 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 37.1km away from the Parish
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Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 30km ¹ of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites?	N	The Parish is 38.2km away from Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites
---	---	--

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 37.3km away from the Wye Valley Woodlands
--	---	---

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 the Weobley 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

¹ If the Parish is within 30km of Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites then the Neighbourhood Plan needs to take account of Greater Horseshoe Bats. If the Parish is within 10km of Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites then the Neighbourhood Plan needs to take account of Lesser Horseshoe Bats.

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

The following environmental features are within or in general proximity to the Weobley 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	10	Sherrington Wood; Sarnesfield Coppice; The Birches (border); Moorhouse Coppice (border); Burfold Orls (border); Dark Hill Wood; Garnstone Wood; Lower Marsh Covert (border); Upper Marsh Covert (border); Stocking 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 are a Conservation Area around Weobley village and the surrounding area	Y
European Sites	0	There are no SAC's within the Parish	N
Flood Areas		Flood Zones 2 and 3 run from east to west following the Newbridge Brook	Y
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous Listed Buildings throughout the Parish	Y
Local Sites (SWS/SINCS/RIGS)	9 SWS	Heath Wood; Sherrington Wood; Pool near Dairy House; Pool near Sarnesfield Court (border); Woods converging on Burton Hill; Field near Weobley Marsh Common (border); Weobley Marsh Common; Weobley Church; Land adjacent to Newbridge Brook, Lower Newton (border)	Y
Long distance footpaths/trails (e.g. Herefordshire Trail)	0	There are no long distance footpaths/trails within the Parish	N
Mineral Reserves	1	Newbridge Brook to Throne Farm, north east of Weobley	Y
National Nature Reserve	0	There are no NNR's within the Parish	N
Registered & Unregistered parks and gardens	2 Registered 2 Unregistered	Registered: Foxley; Broxwood Court (border) Unregistered: Garnstone Park; Sarnesfield (border)	Y
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	5	Moated site and associated fishponds 160m east of Little Sarnesfield; Churchyard Cross at St Peter and St Paul's Church; Kiln Site; Weobley Castle; Hell Moat (border)	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 Weobley Neighbourhood Area:

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

Assessment date: 08/07/2013

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

