

Habitats Regulations Assessment



Cradley Neighbourhood Area

March 2016

Cradley with Storrige Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening

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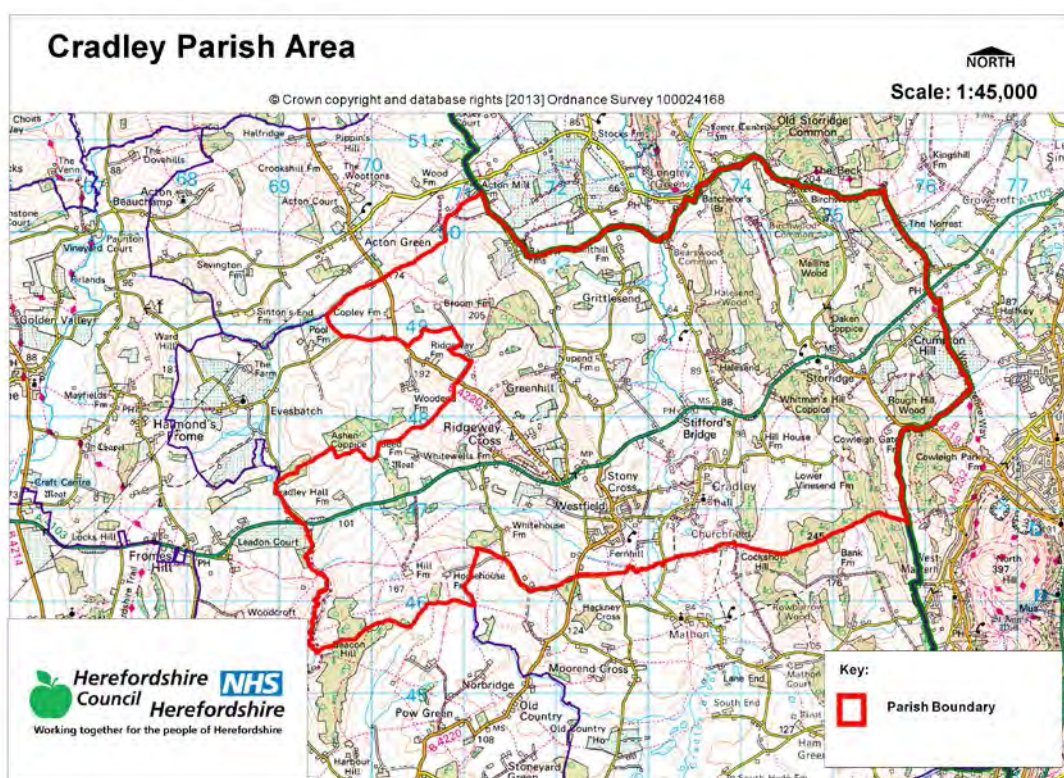
Appendix 1 Initial Screening Report (August 2013)

Appendix 2 Cradley Options

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Cradley Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for its parish, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the area up to 2031.
- 1.2 The Cradley Neighbourhood Area was designated on 8th August 2013 and the map below (Fig1) demonstrates the extent of the area.

Figure 1 –Cradley Neighbourhood Area



2 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment of neighbourhood development plans

- 2.1 The requirement to undertake HRA of neighbourhood 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, Herefordshire Council together with the three Group Parish Councils are required by law to carry out an assessment known as “Habitats Regulations Assessment”. It is also confirmed within 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 development 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.
- **Ramsar sites** support internationally important wetlands habitats

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

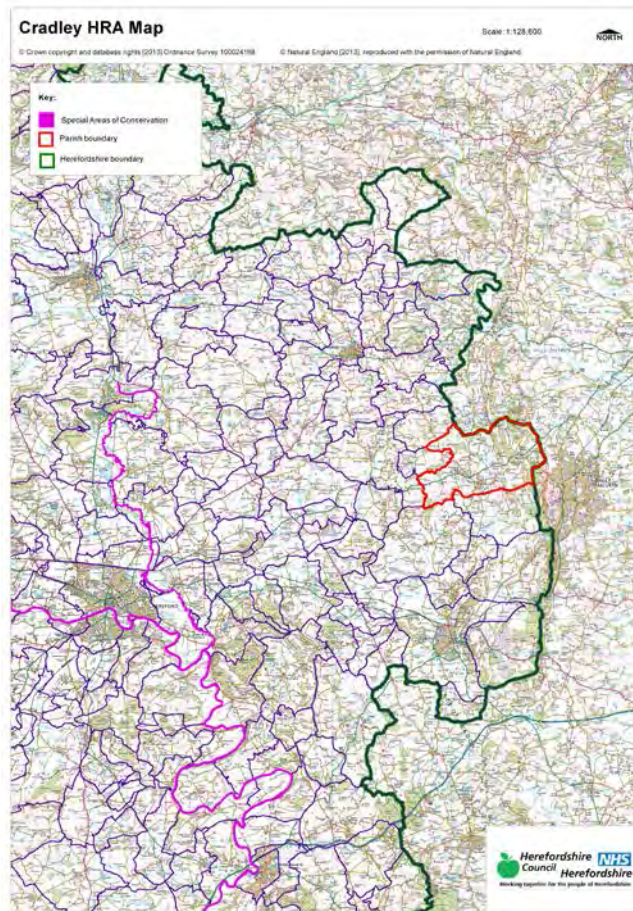
- 3.1 The HRA of neighbourhood development plans is undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy in a neighbourhood development plan would adversely affect the integrity of any European site. This is judged in terms of the implications of the plan for a site's 'qualifying 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.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 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 development plans the outcome should demonstrate there are no likely significant effects upon the European sites. If any likely significant effects occur then there will need to be amendments to the NDP

made and be re-screened until all likely significant effects have been mitigated.

4 Results of the Initial Screening Report

- 4.1 The initial Cradley Screening Report was undertaken in July 2014 and found that the neighbourhood area did not contain any European sites or their proximity would not be affected by policies and proposals within the proposed Cradley with Storridge Neighbourhood Plan.
- 4.2 The map below shows Cradley Neighbourhood Area and demonstrates that there are no European sites within the parish or in close proximity. The initial Cradley Screening Report is attached in appendix 1.

Figure 2 – Cradley Neighbourhood Area and European sites.



5 Conclusions

- 5.1 It is therefore concluded that a full Habitat Regulation Assessment **will not** be required for the Cradley with Storridge Neighbourhood Plan.

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)**

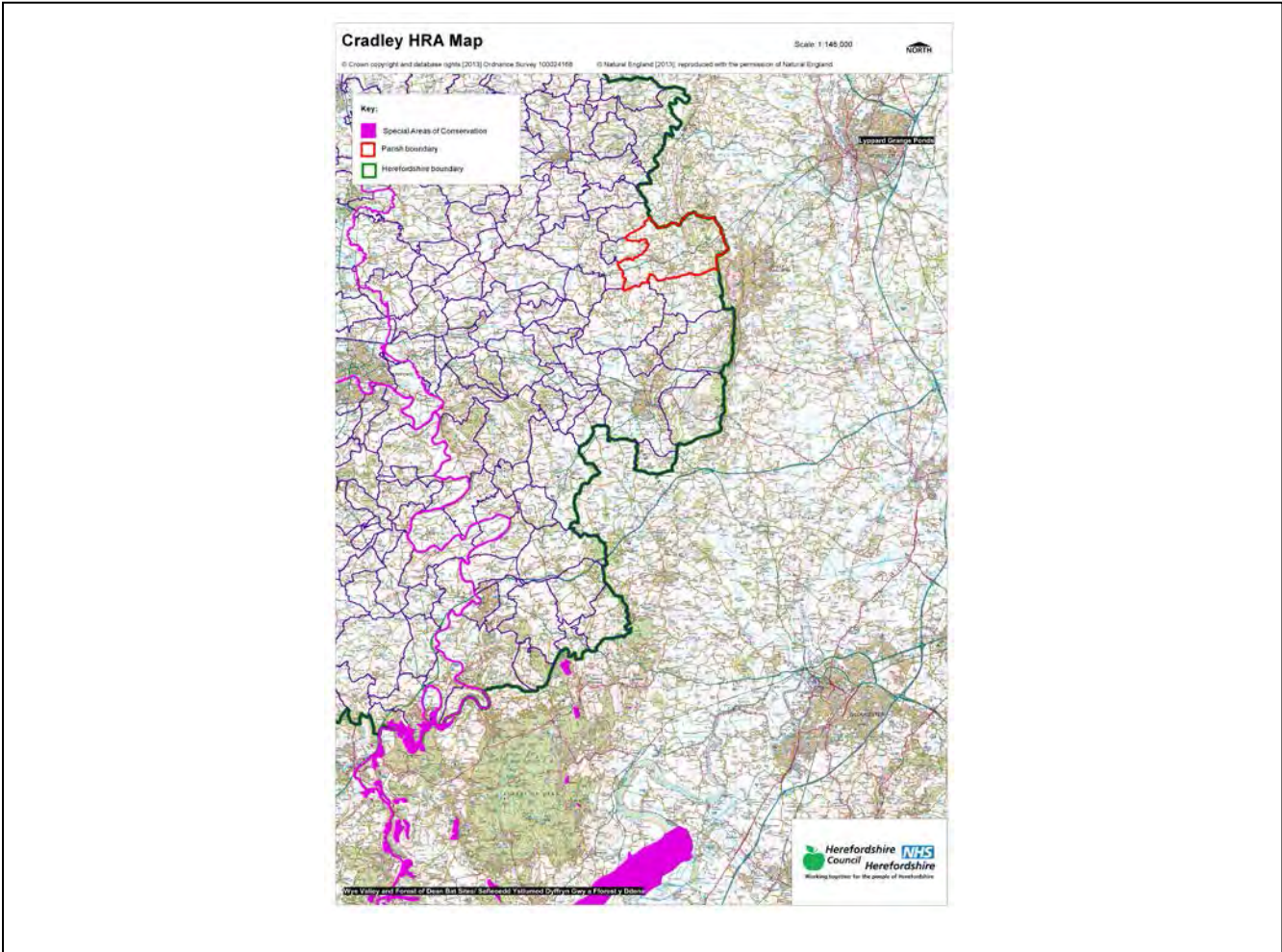
| | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Neighbourhood Area: | Cradley Neighbourhood Area |
| Parish Council: | Cradley Parish Council |
| Neighbourhood Area Designation Date: | 08/08/2013 |

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 are 16km away from the Parish |
| Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC? | N | The parish is not within the River Wye hydrological catchment area |
| If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage? | | Not applicable |

Downton Gorge SAC:

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC? | N | Downton Gorge is 35.9km away from the Parish |
|---|---|--|

River Clun SAC:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Does the Neighbourhood Area include: Border Group Parish Council or Leintwardine Group Parish Council? | N | River Clun does not border the Group Parish |
|--|---|---|

Usk Bat Sites SAC:

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of the SAC boundary? | N | Usk Bat Sites are 57.8km away from the Group Parish |
|--|---|---|

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 25.8km away from Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites |
|--|---|--|

Wye Valley Woodlands SAC:

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|--|---|---|
| Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley Woodlands Site? | N | The Parish is 34.5km away from the Wye Valley Woodlands |
|--|---|---|

HRA Conclusion:

The assessment above highlights that no European Sites will need to be taken into account and a Full HRA Screening will not be required.

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

The following environmental features are within or in general proximity to the Cradley 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 | 28 | Merrells Wood; Ashen Coppice; Penshill Coppice; Beacon Hill; Hollings Wood (border); Lowe Coppice (border); Riley Hill Wood; Grittlesend Wood; Camp Coppice (border); Sindon Wood (border); Suckley Hill Wood (border); Bears Wood Coppice; Halesend Wood; Coney Gore Coppice (border); Shutfield Coppice; Mallins Wood; Deep Leasow Wood; Oaken Coppice; Benstoken Copse (border); Crumpton Hill Wood; Mill Copse (border); High Wood; Six Acre Wood; High Grove Wood; Lumbridge Hill Wood; Horsenut Coppice (border); Bank Farm Wood (border); Row Burrow Wood (border) | Y |
| Areas of Archaeological Interest | 0 | There are no AAI's within the Parish | N |
| Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty | 1 | The Malvern Hills AONB is in the eastern part of the Parish. The AONB runs up to Stiffords Bridge | Y |
| Conservation Areas | 1 | Cradley village is a Conservation Area | Y |
| European Sites | 0 | There are no SAC's within the Parish | N |
| Flood Areas | | Flood Zones 2 and 3 run north to south through the Centre of the Parish through Stiffords Bridge via Cradley Brook | Y |
| Geoparks | 1 | Malvern Hills Geopark | Y |
| Listed Buildings | Numerous | There are numerous Listed Buildings scattered throughout the Parish | Y |
| Local Sites (SWS/SINCs/RIGS) | 2 RIGS 16 SWS | RIGS: Halesend Quarry; Whitmans Hill Quarry SWS: Riley Hill Wood and Blackhouse Rough and Broom Coppice; Ashen & Yewberry Coppices (border); Field at Barnetts Farm; Merrells Wood; Beacon Hill; Lumbridge Hill Wood & adjoining fields; Bank Wood & adjoining woodlands; Field near Brook House Farm; Upper Vines Wood Quarry; High & Rough Hill Woods; Crumpton Hill; Little Byfields Meadow; Halesend, Little Halesend and adj. Woods; New Inn Meadow; Mallins Wood and adjoining wood; Camp Coppice (border) | Y |
| Long distance footpaths/trails | 2 | Miles Without Stiles; Worcester Way | Y |
| Mineral Reserves | 15 | South of Winthill Farm; West of Winthill; | Y |

| | | | |
|---|-------------------|--|---|
| | | Nupend Farm; Bearswood Coppice; Batcomb Farm, Birchwood Common to Storridge Farm; South of Beanhouse Farm; Northeast of Home End Farm, west of Stiffords Bridge; Halesend Wood to Whitemans Hill Coppice; Wild Goose Hill Farm to Rowburrow Wood to north of Ham Green; East of Birchwood Lodge Farm, North of Crumpton Hill; North of Crumpton Hill, east of Birchwood Lodge Farm; Between High Grove Wood and Long Grove (border); Hollings Hill Coppice, south of Westfields; West of Mathon, Hackney Cross (border); High Grove Wood to Brockhill Coppice (border) | |
| National Nature Reserve | 0 | There are no NNR's within the Parish | N |
| Registered & Unregistered parks and gardens | 2 Unregistered | Halesend; Leadon Court (border) | Y |
| Scheduled Ancient Monuments | 0 | There are no SAM's within the Parish | N |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest | 7 | Little Byefields Meadow (Favourable); Halesend Wood (Favourable); Leigh Brook Valley (Favourable (part) Unfavourable Recovering (part)) (border); New Inn Meadow (Unfavourable No Change); Crumpton Hill Wood (Favourable); Bank & Cother Wood (Favourable (part) Unfavourable Recovering (part)); The Malvern Hills (Favourable (part) Unfavourable Recovering (part) (border) | Y |

Decision Notification:

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Cradley 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



Appendix 2

| |
|--|
| CSOP1 To not do an NDP and rely on Core Strategy policies for development |
| CSOP2 Cradley and Storrige to develop as a Dormitory village |
| CSOP3 Cradley and Storrige to develop as a Self-contained community with shops, facilities and employment |
| CSOP4 Cradley and Storrige to develop as it is now. |
| CSOP5 Cradley and Storrige should change the existing settlement boundary. |
| CSOP6 Development should increase the percentage of low cost housing. |
| CSOP7 Development should consist of infill sites between existing developments. |
| CSOP8 Development should develop/ convert existing premises. |
| CSOP9 Development should create small housing sites. |
| CSOP10 New build should be dispersed across the village area |
| CSOP11 Include flood alleviation measures in the plan for new development |
| CSOP12 Do you want provision in the NDP for a second shop and/or cafe in addition to the Butcher's? |
| CSOP13 Do you want provision in the NDP for new sports pitches with car parking |
| CSOP14 Do you want the NDP to keep the area often referred to as the " Strategic Green Gap' between East and West Cradley as an area free of development? |
| CSOP15 Do you want the NDP to make restrictions on the size in terms of housing numbers of future housing development? |
| CSOP16 what you would consider as an acceptable size for a housing development: 1-3 houses |
| CSOP17 what you would consider as an acceptable size for a housing development: 3-5 houses |
| CSOP18 what you would consider as an acceptable size for a housing development: 5-10 houses |
| CSOP19 what you would consider as an acceptable size for a housing development: Above 10 |
| CSOP20 Whether to / how to develop existing village community areas |
| CSOP21 Develop a new 'heart of village' site. |
| CSOP22 Do you think additional residential accommodation here should be affordable, for local people to purchase or rent |
| CSOP23 Accommodation in Cradley should be rental homes including social housing |
| CSOP24 Additional residential accommodation in Cradley should be small or medium-sized family homes |
| CSOP25 Additional residential accommodation in Cradley should be executive homes |
| CSOP26 Additional residential accommodation in Cradley should be sheltered accommodation |
| CSOP27 Additional residential accommodation in Cradley should be no new buildings? |

| |
|---|
| CSOP28 If any new houses are built in the parish what sort of design should be traditional designs |
| CSOP29 If any new houses are built in the parish what sort of design should be bungalow |
| CSOP30 If any new houses are built in the parish what sort of design should be terraced |
| CSOP31 If any new houses are built in the parish what sort of design should be eco build |
| CSOP32 If any new houses are built in the parish what sort of design should be half-timbered style |
| CSOP33 If any new houses are built in the parish what sort of design should be with own garage or off-road parking |
| CSOP34 Including recycling scheme within the plan |
| CSOP35 Have more street lighting for Cradley and Storridge |
| CSOP36 Create wildlife-friendly habitats |
| CSOP37 create an area for allotments |
| CSOP38 Have better hedgerow management |
| CSOP39 Have more sensitive verge management |
| CSOP40 Create village pond |
| CSOP41 Cradley Parish Council should support and promote community involvement in any of the following climate change initiatives for wind turbines. |
| CSOP42 Cradley Parish Council should support and promote community involvement in any of the following climate change initiatives for solar panels. |
| CSOP43 Cradley Parish Council should support and promote community involvement in any of the following climate change initiatives for wind turbines. |
| CSOP44 Cradley Parish Council should support and promote community involvement in any of the following climate change initiatives for geothermal heat systems. |
| CSSOP1 Develop houses on field opposite St Katherine's |
| CSSOP2 Develop houses on next to new School |
| CSSOP3 Develop houses on behind Pixiefield/Chockbury |
| CSSOP4 Develop houses on site opposite 'Taswold' Farm Storridge |
| CSSOP5 Develop houses on west of Westfield Lane/Bumpy Lane |