HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

Shaping our Place 2026

Local Development Framework

Core Strategy:

Developing Options Paper

Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Report Addendum

April 2009

Addendum to Core Strategy: Developing Options Paper, Habitat Regulations Assessment, Screening Report dated June 2008, March 2009

Contents

Appendices

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Herefordshire Council has undertaken a further stage of the Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) of its Core Strategy in accordance with European Directives and with the support of key stakeholders. The recommendations and conclusions from the assessment will be used with other evidence bases and consultation responses to develop the Core Strategy Strategic Options. At the next stage these newly developed Options will be placed on consultation in late Summer.

2.0 Purpose of the Report

2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an addendum to the previous June 2008 HRA report to provide the findings of a workshop that completed the screening stage of the HRA of the Core Strategy Developing Options.

2.2 A correction is also required on paragraph 4.7 of the original report. It stated that "It is proposed to carry all these screened sites, except Lyppard Grange Ponds, to the next HRA stage of Appropriate Assessment". This was incorrect. It should have been reported that it was not possible to conclude the screening process until a workshop had been held with invitees from Countryside Council for Wales, Natural England, Environment Agency along with relevant Herefordshire Council Officers. This workshop will confirm and expand on site sensitivities obtained from the JNCC website and other sources to gain a general consensus on potential impacts.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 In accordance with guidance and advice following on from the previous report Herefordshire Council undertook an assessment of the four strategic Options as they appeared in the June 2008 Developing Options Paper.

3.2 Key stakeholders were invited to a workshop meeting that took place in August 2008. They were provided with a large ordinance survey map of the County with the identified 15km buffer zone highlighted on it. As the workshop progressed the various European Sites identified through the scoping exercise were pointed out to attendees to give spatial awareness of the sites to the various strategic Options for growth.

3.3 Information for each of the sites was made available during the discussion and used to identify what the sensitivities for each of the sites were. Once these had been confirmed and agreed the workshop attendees then used these sensitivities to assess whether the four strategic Options would result in likely significant effects.

3.4 It was recognised that the impacts highlighted for each of the Options was very high level and that future assessments would be needed at a greater level of detail as the Options develop more place specificity through the plan making process. The sensitivities and overall assessment of the strategic Options can be viewed in Appendix 1.

3.5 The colour coded key used for the assessment identifies three outcomes for the strategic Options.

- Green represents that there is unlikely to be a significant effect of the strategic option upon the site sensitivities,
- Amber reflects that more information is needed before an effect on the site sensitivities can be determined and as such the precautionary principle should be employed or that the impacts need to be avoided in the first instance and where avoidance is not possible that mitigation could be made to a satisfactory level to avoid impacts, and
- Red identifies that likely significant effects are likely upon the site sensitivities and avoidance is therefore necessary.

3.6 The Place Shaping and Policy Options were assessed in house using the confirmed sensitivities from the August 2008 workshop to identify generally which sensitivities were likely to be affected. These were recorded as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the same Place Shaping and Policy Options for the Core Strategy and the results of this assessment can be viewed in the Addendum to the Core Strategy Developing Options Paper Sustainability Appraisal, which can be found on the Council's website.

4.0 Where we are now

4.1 The results of the August 2008 workshop with key stakeholders and the in house assessment of the Place Shaping and Policy Options have been integrated into the Core Strategy Strategic Options and this HRA report and the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report form addendums to the HRA and SA June 2008 papers.

5.0 Next steps

5.1 Workshops are being arranged for late Spring 2009 to assess the latest emerging Core Strategy Place Shaping and Policy Options following the integration of the consultation responses, available evidence base, HRA and SA results.

5.2 The same key stakeholders will be invited along with the addition of water companies in light of the Regional Spatial Strategy HRA. The assessment is envisaged to be in greater detail incorporating any available evidence base. It will also cover in-combination effects wherever possible.

5.3 The outcomes of this workshop will be incorporated into the emerging Place Shaping and Policy Options and the remaining stages of the HRA will be conducted in line with the plan making process. This will include an Appropriate Assessment of those designated sites which are considered to have likely significant effects from the Core Strategy.

5.4 The next HRA report will be published with the Core Strategy submission document. However, there will be continuous engagement with key stakeholders and other interested parties throughout the process and the document will publish the outcomes of the remaining stages of the process.

6.0 Consultation

6.1 Herefordshire Council will continue to consult Natural England, Countryside Council for Wales, the Environment Agency, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds and the Planning Advisory Service throughout the preparation of the HRA and will also communicate with other neighbouring Authorities as appropriate.

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Herefordshire Council has now completed its screening assessment of the Core Strategy Developing Options Paper as at June 2008. In the original report only one of the European Sites could be screened out, Lyppard Grange Ponds as it was concluded that it would not have any likely significant effects. The remaining 17 European Sites were kept in by means of the precautionary principle. However, through the key stakeholder workshop held in August 2008 a further 7 sites have been ruled out as it was considered that the Core Strategy Strategic Options would not cause likely significant effects upon them. These sites are as follows: Coed y Cerrig, Cotswold Beechwoods, Cwm Clydach Woodlands, Rodborough Common, Seven Estuary RAMSAR, Sugar Loaf Woodlands and Walmore Common. The remaining sites will be assessed in more detail in the next stage of the HRA, the Appropriate Assessment.

Appendix 1: Completed Screening of Selected European Sites

Table 1: Coed y Cerrig			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno-padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)	The sensitives for this site include the water level and quality, and also possible air pollution, although the direction of the prevailing winds within the county would mean that the wind would hit this site before it would hit the rest of the county. We may be able to rule this site out, unless it has a hydrological connection. Additional research following the workshop, using the APIS website, was not of use here and therefore in this instance google satellite maps were used to identify if there was a water course entering the designated site. From reviewing these images and OS maps, no water course was identified. In the event of heavy rain it could be argued that pollutants from runoff through agricultural land could affect the site. However, the site is subject to a management plan and so long as this is mantained, no significant effects should result from such occurances.	Options A, B & C are Green and Option D Amber. Site ruled out as no hydrological connection and due to the site having a management plan.	Green	Green	Green	Amber

Table 2: Cotswold Beechwoods			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests	This site has been ruled out due to distance (it is outside the 15k boundary line), it also has no hydrological connectivity. Gloucester and the Motorway are sources of air pollution and in combination with development in Herefordshire could cause issues for the sensitivities of the site. However the designated site is unlikely to be affected by this issue due to the prevailing wind direction. If there was growth in Ross-on-Wye, this may lead to an increase in traffic between Ross and Gloucester but because of the prevailing wind, it is not considered to result in a significant effect.	This site was not scored as it was ruled out on the grounds of distance with regards to the prevailing wind direction and thus having no significant effect on air quality.	Green	Green	Green	Green

Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*)	Source - APIS website - www.apis.co.uk/home.html - Nutrient nitrogen and acidity. The ecosystem impacts are increased taller grasses, decline in diversity, increased mineralization and nitrogen leaching. Acidity ecosystem impacts include leaching causing a decrease in soil base saturation, increasing the availability of Al3+ ions (a metal, aluminimum, aquo ion), mobilisation of Al3+ may cause toxicity to plants and mycorrhiza, may have direct effect on lower plants (bryphtes and lichens). The top 4 sources of each of these pollutants are for nitrogen deposition livestock emissions (38%), non-agricultural (16%), imported emissions (17%) (for which we have little control over) and road transport (9%). For acidic (sulphur) deposition imported emissions (11%) (again, for which we have little control over), sulphur dioxide emissions from shipping (10%) and other point sources (8%), however since the prevailing winds in the UK are generally south westerly it is still considered to be appropriate to be ruled out.	As above				

Table 3: Cwm Clydach Woodlands			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests	The workshop concluded that the site is on the extremities of the 15k boundary line. There is no hydrological connections, and there are no air pollution problems with this site. Following the workshop the Nature 2000 SAC data form was refered too and it highlights fly tipping and vandalism, road improvement plans and associated development, airbourne acid and nutrient deposition as not a significant threat as most of the woodland soils are well buffered and nutrient rich. However, the APIS website acknowledges both nutrient nitrogen and acidity as senstivities that can change specie composition, increase nitrophilous species, increase susceptibility to parasites and decrease soil base saturation through leaching, increase availability and mobility of Al3+ that may cause - toxicity to plants and mycorrhiza, decline in tree vitality and changes in ground flora species composition, and have direct susceptibility to pathogens and pests. Top 3 nitrogen sources are from livestock (28%), road transport (20%) and imported emissions (18%). Top 3 sulphur sources are from imported emissions (16%), Aberthaw power station (14%) and combustion in commercial, institutional and residential (10%), with a further 13% coming from other sources.	Options A, B & C are Green and Option D is Amber. Site ruled out after workshop on the basis that the woodland soils are well buffered and nutrient rich.	Green	Green	Green	Amber

Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with *Ilex* and sometimes also *Taxus* in the shrub layer (*Quercion robori-petraeae* or *Ilici-Fagenion*)	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above	As above

Table 4: Downton Gorge			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines	The sensitivities for this site are the air quality, humidity and water borne pollution. Additional research following the workshop using the APIS website states, under ecological notes, that the habitat is sensitive to acidity but as it tends to occur on limestone soils, it is not sensitive here. The Natura 2000 SAC data form states the soil and geology type to be limestone and therefore it can be concluded that acidity is unlikely to be a sensitivity of this site. It is however sensitive to eutrophication of nutrient nitrogen that can change specie composition, increase of nitrophilious species, increased susceptibility to parasites. The top 3 sources for nutrient nitrogen are livestock emissions (42%), imported emmisions (13%) and road transport (14%).	The site is sensitive to eutrophication and therefore the potential for increase in road transport from the options could affect the site.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

Table 5: Drostre Bank			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)	There will be no hydrological issues with this site, although there could be issue with water extraction from the River Wye. This site can not be ruled out at this point. Additional research from the Natura 2000 SAC data form, following the workshop revealed that the site boundary includes land on the west side of the road as well as the majority that lies on the east side. Google map and OS maps were utilised to establish any water courses and none appear to be located in or around the site. However, it is likely that vegetated ditches around the site are sources of water as the site lies at the bottom of a hill. The site is also surrounded by agricultural land which could have herbicides and fertilisers applied to improve the land. Natural succession also results in reversion to rank secondary fen and scrubby woodland. A management agreement should relieve the site of such pressures. Eutrophication from inward drainage of water enriched by nitrogenous and phosphatic fertilisers and also fertiliser spray drift could also result. The top 3 sources of Nitrogen deposition are livestock emissions (42%), imported	Due to water abstraction Options A, B and C should be given Amber ratings.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

	emissions (18%) and road transport (12%). The top 3 sources of sulphur deposition are imported emssions (14%), Aberthaw power station (10%), combustion in commercial, institutional and residential (6%) and 13% from other sources.					
Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Franxinus excelsior* (*AlnoPadion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae*)	As above.	As above				

Table 6: Llangorse Lake			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrochartition* - type vegetation	The main sensitivities for this site will be the water levels and quality. Following discussions with CCW recreational, arable and dairy farming were also highlighted as issues for the lake. It was confirmed that it is essentially a naturally occuring eutrophic lake with inlets from the Afon Llynfi river which downstream joins the River Wye. With this connection and the top 3 sources a of nutrient nitrogen coming from livestock emissions (37%), imported emissions (20%) and road transport (11%), it is not posible to rule out this site at this stage.	This site should be rated Amber for all options. Due to connections with the River Wye and road transport emissions sensitivities the site can not be ruled out.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

Table 7: Lyppard Grange Ponds			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* (101-250 residents)	This site is surrounded by residential dwellings, there will be no impact on this site from development in Herefordshire. This site can be ruled out.	This site was not scored as it was ruled out on distance and existing development grounds.	Green	Green	Green	Green

Table 8: Rhos Goch			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**

Active raised bogs	The sensitivites are air and water level, and quality. Natural succession of willow and birch carr are also a problem, however a management plan should control this. An increase in livestock grazing should also help here. Agricultural intensification has also caused problems of eutrophication on surrounding land and rainfall has become more acidified. Water levels are controlled by sluices and eutrophication is managed by the buffer provided by unimproved grassland. Eutrophication changes species composition and nitrogen saturation of Sphagnum. Acidification causes a decrease in soil base saturation through leaching, increases the availability and mobility of aluminimum ions which may cause toxicity to plants and mycorrhiza and a direct effect on lower plants (bryophtes and lichens).	Due to water abstraction issues this site is to be given an Amber rating.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Transition mires and quaking bogs	As above	As above				
Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*)	As above	As above				
Bog woodland	As above	As above				

Table 9: River Clun			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera*	Maintenance of the Salmon population within the River, and water quality are the sensitivities for this site. It will also need to maintain a fast flow of cool water and clean gravels. It should also be noted that the River Teme connects into the River Clun. It is also dependant on low sediment and nitrate levels. The presence of trout are also important for its breeding cycle. Sedimentation from poor agricultural practice can smother the mussels. The loss of alders along the river bank also reduce the shade needed. An integrated approach is being managed to control these impacts on site.	There is not enough information available to give a definitive answer for this site, however it should probably be given an Amber rating.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber

Table 10: River Usk			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation	This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained. Water quality is reported to be good, however localised enrichment does occur at sewage discharge points. Water abstractions are being monitored by the environment agency.	No reasons given for the rating other than we shouldn't rule this site out due to it flowing into the Talybont Reservoir.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above				

Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above
River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above
Twaite shad *Alosa fallax*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above
Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above
Bullhead *Cottus gobio*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above
Allis shad *Alosa alosa*	**As above.** This site can be ruled out as long as water quality can be maintained.	As above
Otter *Lutra lutra*	**As above.** Comments above apply and in addition Otters could be disturbed by increase in footfall from tourism.	As above

Table 11: River Wye and Lugg			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitricho-Batrachion* vegetation	Water flow and quality may be affected. Disturbance of the bed and banks needs to be avoided. It also needs to be protected from any pollution. Water quality issues arise from changing agricultural land use and diffuse pollution from nutrient run-off and increased siltation for example. Synthetic pyrethroid sheep dip is also a point source discharge. Sewage treatment works are addressed through assest management plans. The loss of riparian habitats are caused by agricultural land use practices, riverside development and loss of Alder tree cover. Abstraction demands are increasing and the maintenance of water levels and flow will be addressed through the review of consents process. Future concerns are increased recreational activities which will need to be controlled.	This should be a Red rating due to it being at critical load	Red	Red	Red	Amber
Transition mires and quaking bogs	As above. Maintaining appropriate management is essential for these.	As above				
White-clawed (or Atlantic Stream) crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*	As above. Competition and disease will lead to the local extinction of this species. Water quality will also have a detrimental effect.	As above				
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*	As above. Water quality maintenance	As above				
Brook lamprey *Lampetra planeri*	As above. Water quality maintenance	As above				
River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*	As above. Water quality maintenance	As above				

Critical Load refers to the maximum load that a given system can tolerate before failing.

Twaite shad *Alosa fallax*	As above. Water quality maintenance	As above				
Atlantic salmon *Salmo salar*	As above Water quality maintenance	As above				
Bullhead *Cottus gobio*	As above. Water quality maintenance	As above				
Otter *Lutra lutra*	As above. Otters could be disturbed by increase in footfall from tourism.	As above				
Allis shad *Alosa alosa*	As above. Water quality maintenance	As above				

Table 12: Rodborough Common			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*)	Recreation is an issue for this site and other issues are controlled with appropriate management. This site has been ruled out due to distance from any proposed new development.	This site was not scored as it was concluded that the site could be ruled out on distance grounds.	Green	Green	Green	Green

Table 13: Severn Estuary (SAC)			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Estuaries	Features are dependant on the tidal regime. Natural erosion occurs as the strong tidal streams moves along the seabed. It is senstive to large scale interference from human actions, including land claim, aggregate extraction, physical developments such as a barrage, flood defences, pollution, eutrophication, tourism activities and disturbance. This site needs to be ruled in. A lot of this site will be potential mitigation by the River Wye.	Cannot rule out this site. It was noted that the Wye flows into the Severn and more information about the site is needed.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide	As above	As above				
Atlantic salt meadows *Glauca-Puccinellietalia maritimae*	As above	As above				
Sandbanks, which are slightly covered by sea water all the time	As above	As above				
Reefs	As above	As above				
Sea lamprey *Petromyzon marinus*	As above	As above				
River lamprey *Lampetra fluviatilis*	As above	As above				
Twaite shad *Alosa fallax*	As above	As above				

Table 14: Severn Estuary (SPA)	**Core Strategy Strategic Options**

Appendix 1: Completed Screening of Selected European Sites

Reasons for Site Designation	Sensitivities	Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Gadwall *Anas strepera* 282 Individuals	Features are dependant on the tidal regime. Natural erosion occurs as the strong tidal streams moves along the seabed. It is senstive to large scale interference from human actions, including land claim, aggregate extraction, physical devpts such as a barrage, flood defences, pollution, eutrophication, tourism activities and disturbance. The international bird interest underpins this designation. This site needs to be ruled in. A lot of this site will be mitigated by the River Wye.	Cannot rule out this site. It was noted that the Wye flows into the Severn and more information about the site is needed.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Greater White-fronted Goose *Anser albifrons* 2664 Individuals	As above	As above				
Dunlin *Caldidris alpina* 44624 individuals	As above	As above				
Beswick Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* 280 individuals	As above	As above				
Common Shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* 3330 individuals	As above	As above				
Common Redshank *Tringa totanus* 2330 individuals	As above	As above				
84317 waterfowl including all of the above mentioned species	As above	As above				

Table 15: Severn Estuary (RAMSAR)			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
70919 waterfowl	The mud flats provide the ideal habitat for high densities and specie diversity of invertebrates that the birds feed on. Dredging, erosion, recreational and tourism disturbance may affect the site adversely. Other activities on the esturary include, walking, dog walking, birdwatching along the sea walls year round. Bathing, beach recreation, sand yachting and wind surfing in the summer. Boat clubs, sailing, motor boats, jet skiing. Angling on shore and small boats, bait digging. Wildfowling from September to February with agreed refuge areas for birds.	It is unlikely that recreational pressures from Herefordshire will impact upon the RAMSAR and therefore the site has been ruled out.	Green	Green	Green	Green
Tundra swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* , NW Europe, 229 individuals	As above	As above				
Greater white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons* , NW Europe, 2076 individuals	As above	As above				

Critical Load refers to the maximum load that a given system can tolerate before failing.

Common shelduck *Tadorna tadorna* , NW Europe, 3223 individuals	As above	As above				
Gadwall *Anas strepera* , NW Europe, 241 individuals	As above	As above				
Dunlin *Calidris alpina* , W Siberia/W Europe, 25082 individuals	As above	As above				
Common redshank *Tringa tetanus* , 2616 individuals	As above	As above				
Lesser black-backed gull *Larus fuscus graellsii* , W Europe/Mediterranean/W Africa, 4167 apparently occupied nests	As above	As above				
Ringed plover *Charadrius hiaticula* , Europe/Northwest Africa, 740 individuals	As above	As above				
Eurasian teal *Anas crecca* , NW Europe, 4456 individuals	As above	As above				
Northern pintail *Anas acuta* , NW Europe, 756 individuals	As above	As above				
Fish – *Alosa alosa*	As above	As above				
Alosa fallax	As above	As above				
Lampetra fluviatilis	As above	As above				
Petromyzon marinus	As above	As above				

Table 16: Sugar Loaf Woodlands			**Core Strategy Strategic Options**			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles	Regeneration of trees, control of grazing, fire risk, disturbance from public access are issues affecting the site and are maintained by means of a management plan. Air quality needs to be considered as a site sensitivity as well as nutrient deposition especially because of epiphytic lichens on oak trees. According to the APIS website in 2003 N deposition and critical load functions was 28.3kg/ha/yr and S 11.2kg/ha/yr and by 2010 N is expected to be 25.1kg/ha/yr and S 8.6kg/ha/yr.	Critical loads for nitrogen and sulphur are expected to reduce by 2010 and with a management plan in place any potential impacts from Herefordshire are unlikely to cause adverse effects and the site can therefore be ruled out.	Green	Green	Green	Green

Table 17: Usk Bat sites			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
European dry heaths	Minimal disturbance is required for the bats that reside in both a large coach house and caves which are safeguarded. Most of the features are located on common land with grazing rights, these can be difficult to control and a grazing pattern would be desirable here. Effects of atmospheric inputs on the blanket bogs are unknown. They have also been subject to hydrological change from ditch construction. Therefore this site cannot be ruled out as it is used for foraging and hibernation.	More information is needed on Bats and water abstraction on the site and therefore the rating of Amber should be applied.	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration	As above	As above				
Blanket bogs	As above	As above				
Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation	As above	As above				
Caves not open to the public	As above	As above				
Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines	As above	As above				
Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*	As above	As above				

Table 18: Walmore Common			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Bewick Swan *Cygnus columbianus bewickii* 104 individuals	Sensitives include grassland that is used for feeding and roosting and is maintained by grazing and natural winter flooding which is determined by rainfall, run-off and river levels. A management plan maintains levels for the wintering birds. The site can be ruled out due to its location outside the County, and the prevailing wind direction and in addition the site is not sensitive to N or S deposition.	This site was not scored as it was ruled out on the grounds of prevailing wind direction and not being sensitive to nitrogen or sulphur deposition.	Green	Green	Green	Green

Table 19: Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites	Core Strategy Strategic Options

Reasons for Site Designation	Sensitivities	Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*	Bats are vulnerable to disturbance at critical times, structural alterations and changes in characterisitc ventilation patterns to buildings they inhabit. Loss of foraging and flight lines for the bats could also have negative effects. There should be no development within a certain radius of Bat sites. More information is needed.	There may be development near this area, however more information about the site is needed. A rating of Amber for Options A, B & C	Amber	Amber	Amber	Amber
Greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*	As above	As above				

Table 20: Wye Valley Woodlands			Core Strategy Strategic Options			
Reasons for Site Designation	**Sensitivities**	**Comments e.g Sensitivities V Options**	**Option A**	**Option B**	**Option C**	**Option D**
Beech forests *Asperulo-Fagetum*	A management plan and felling license is in place with CCW and NE to prevent a lack of management and inappropriate management proposals that alter recognised woodland types such as coppicing. The site is senstive to eutrophication and acidification (N and S deposition) and the top 3 sources of N emissions are from livestock emissions, imported emissions and road transport, S emissions are from Aberthaw power station, imported emissions and other emissions. Therefore this site cannot be ruled out.	As the site is near to Ross-on-Wye there may be development near to the site. Therefore Option A was given a Red rating and Options B & C were Amber rated.	Red	Amber	Amber	Amber
Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines	As above	As above				
Taxus baccata woods of the British Isles	As above	As above				
Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros* , 51-100 residents	As above	As above				