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Ms Victoria Eaton,  
Senior Planning Officer  
Herefordshire Council  
Plough Lane  
Hereford  
HR4 0LE

9 May 2022

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Dear Ms Eaton

## Examination of Herefordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan

Following our initial review of the publication draft Minerals and Waste Local Plan and the submitted documents, we have identified that the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) requires to be reviewed and updated to take into account Natural England's latest advice on nutrient neutrality. We also have some initial questions in relation to the Plan to enable us to progress the examination.

### Habitats Regulations Assessment

Natural England has recently updated the conservation status of the River Clun SAC and has provided updated advice together with a new generic methodology for assessing nutrient pollution.

A review of the HRA is necessary to take into account this advice and update. In carrying out this review, you should obtain the views of Natural England as the appropriate nature conservation body and consider any available nutrient neutral mitigation proposals. This work is necessary to enable us to consider whether the Herefordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan will result in a likely significant effect on the integrity of the European site.

### Other initial questions

1. The Duty to Co-operate Statement indicates verbal agreement to preparation of Statements of Common Ground with Worcestershire and Gloucestershire County Councils. Please advise of any progress made with these.
2. Please explain the reasons for the restrictions imposed in Policy M1(d) on extraction of hydrocarbons.
3. Should Policy M2 refer to safeguarding of infrastructure, and should it refer specifically to the railheads?
4. Please explain how provision will be made from the allocated sites in Policies M3 and M4, including whether this would be from extensions to the permitted areas of working or extensions of the periods of working. What tonnages are expected from each site?
5. How does the current non-operational status of Shobdon and Upper Lyde quarries affect the provision for sand and gravel?
6. Please provide further explanation of how the figure of 9mt for crushed rock in Policy M4 has been arrived at.

7. How has demand from infrastructure projects such as HS2 been taken into account in the assessment of need?
8. How have the preferred areas of search for limestone been identified and how have constraints been taken into account in identifying these? Area D includes part of the AONB. What is the justification for this?
9. Please explain how the Heritage Impact Assessments justify the proposed allocations.
10. In Policy W1, existing waste facilities that are not in accordance with the spatial strategy would not be safeguarded. What is the justification for this?

Please would you indicate a timescale for completion of the HRA update and for providing responses to the above questions.

Yours sincerely

*Nick Palmer and Rachael Bust*

INSPECTORS