

# Strategic Environmental Assessment

Scoping Report for:

Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Area

February 2025



## Consultation on the Scoping Report

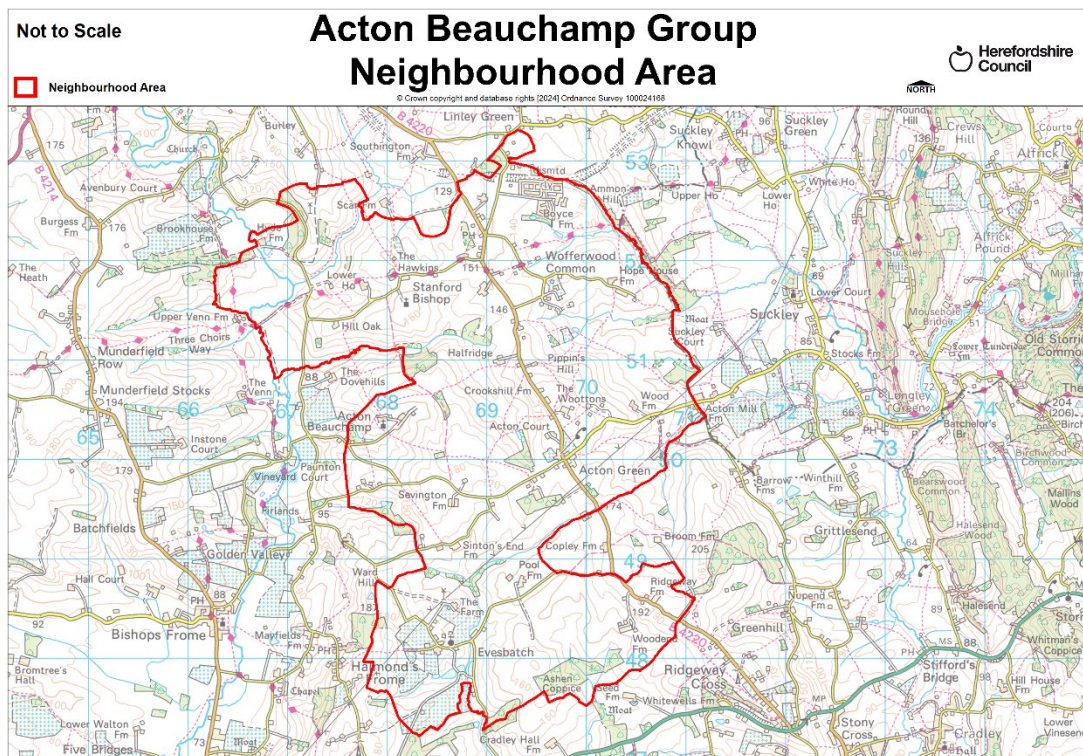
The aim of the consultation process is to involve and engage with statutory consultees and other relevant bodies on the scope of the appraisal. In particular, it seeks to:

- Ensure the SEA is both comprehensive and sufficiently robust to support the Neighbourhood Development Plan during the later stages of full public consultation;
- Seek advice on the completeness of the plan review and baseline data and gain further information where appropriate;
- Seek advice on the suitability of key sustainability issues;
- Seek advice on the suitability of the sustainability objectives.

Comments on this Scoping Report have been invited from the three consultation bodies as required by the SEA regulations, together with Natural Resources Wales.

The three consultation bodies are as follows:

1. Natural England;
2. Historic England;
3. Environment Agency.



## Identification and review of local Neighbourhood Area relevant plans, policies and programmes

**Parish Council Name:** Acton Beauchamp Group

**Neighbourhood Development Plan Name:** Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Development Plan

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### Domestic Legislation

#### The Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981)

**Overview:** The major legal instrument for wildlife protection in Britain, although other significant acts have been passed since. It has numerous parts and supplementary lists and schedules many of which have been amended since publication.

**Key target:** The principle mechanism for the legislative protection of wildlife in Great Britain.

**SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Soil

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Neighbourhood Plan should be compliant with all the relevant legislation and regulations.

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#### The Countryside and Right of Way Act (2000)

**Overview:** Creates a statutory right of access on foot to certain types of open land, to modernise the public rights of way system, to strengthen nature conservation legislation, and to facilitate better management of AONBs (now known as National Landscapes).

**Key target:** The Act provides for a new right of access on foot to areas of open land comprising: Mountain (land over 600 metres); Moorland; Heath; Downland; Registered common land. There are provisions to consider extending the right in the future to coastal land, but not woodland despite some early publicity suggesting this.

**SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Soil

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Neighbourhood Plan should be compliant with all the relevant legislation and regulations.

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### **The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)**

**Overview:** Designed to help achieve a rich and diverse natural environment and thriving rural communities through modernised and simplified arrangements for delivering Government policy.

**Key target:** Provides that any public body or statutory undertaker in England and Wales must have regard to the purpose of conservation of biological diversity in the exercise of their functions.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Soil

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Neighbourhood Plan should be compliant with all the relevant legislation and regulations.

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## **National Strategy**

### **Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011)**

**Overview:** Forms part of the UK's Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework by setting out England's contribution towards the UK's commitments under the United Nations Convention of Biological Diversity.

**Key target:** Sets out to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The NDP should take account of the provisions of the strategy, making the most of opportunities to enhance wildlife habitats or restore degraded ecosystems in the process.

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## **National Planning Policy**

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)**

**Overview:** Consolidates the suite of PPG/PPS into one succinct planning policy document.

**Key target:** To apply the basis for planning policies across England.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets

- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The NDP should take into account the relevant policies set within the new NPPF (Dec 2024).

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## Government Guidance

### Planning Practice Guidance (Updated when required)

**Overview:** Provides guidance to local planning authorities and others on the operation of the planning system.

**Key target:** Additional Guidance on planning topics

#### SEA Topics:

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The NDP should take into account the planning guidance provided within these documents.

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## Development Plan Document (DPD)

### Herefordshire Core Strategy, (adopted) 2011-2031 (2015)

**Overview:** Sets out the vision, objectives and policies for the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy), which will guide development across the county up to 2031.

**Key target:** Outlines the emerging suite of countywide planning policies relating to housing, economic development and the environment, which the NDP will need to be in conformity with where relevant. The Core Strategy includes a range of objectives, five of which directly relate to rural areas:

- To meet the housing needs of all sections of the community
- To improve access to services in rural areas
- To strengthen the economic viability of the villages and their rural hinterlands
- To achieve sustainable communities and protect the environment
- To conserve, promote, utilise and enjoy our natural, built, historic and cultural assets for the fullest benefit of the whole community.

To achieve a thriving rural Herefordshire, the Core Strategy seeks to enhance the role the villages have traditionally played in as accessible, sustainable centres for their rural catchments.

Acton Beauchamp Group is within the Bromyard Housing Market Area (HMA) of which the target for proportionate growth is 15%. However, the parish is not listed in table 4.14 or table 4.15, therefore Policy RA2 is not applicable.

**SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The NDP should take account of relevant policies set within in the Core Strategy. Where necessary, the NDP should provide services, facilities and employment opportunities that are accessible to both local and neighbouring communities. There are no identified Core Strategy settlements (Policy RA2) within the NDP area, the NDP should take into consideration policy RA3.

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## Corporate Documents

### Herefordshire Local Transport Plan 2016-2031 (2016)

**Overview:** The Local Transport Plan outlines the significant role that transport will play to enable the delivery of the Core Strategy proposals. This sets out the Council's strategy for supporting economic growth, social inclusion and reducing the environmental impacts of transport, as well as the program of investment for the period 2016 to 2031. The LTP is currently undergoing a review.

**Key target:** The Transport Plan aims to increase highway capacity for new development sites as improve efficiency of existing transport network. The document includes five key objectives, one which plans to enable economic growth connecting new roads with developments. Intrinsic to this is to provide a good quality transport network. The other objectives aim to promote healthy lifestyles with pollution reduction and active travel schemes. Improvements will be made to make journeys easier and safer, ensuring access to services for living in rural areas maximising accessibility.

**SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Climate factors
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The LTP does not explore current transport issues in the Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Plan area, but any new development proposed through the NDP should seek to reduce the environmental impacts of transport.

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### **Understanding Herefordshire Report (2025)**

**Overview:** Important to understand the place such as the local economy natural and built environment in which people live, learn and work as part of understanding their quality-of-life Promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. Enable development for economy and housing to required levels. Growth should be supported by sustainable transport measures.

**Key target:** An air quality management plan is in place to tackle this. Destination Hereford project is in place to give locals more sustainable transport options. Sustainable transport measures will also help to promote active lifestyles within Herefordshire.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air quality

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** None identified

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### **Malvern Hills NL Management Plan 2019-2024 (2015)**

**Overview:** The Management Plan is the prime document which sets out the vision and objectives for the Malvern Hills AONB area and the priorities for its management. A review of the NL management plan is currently being undertaken, which is expected to be adopted by the end of March 2025.

**Key target:** Identifies the issues and challenges facing the special features of the area and contains 68 policies and 15 strategic objectives.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Plan Area is not within or adjacent to the Malvern Hills AONB (NL).

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### **Wye Valley AONB management Plan 2021-2026 (2015)**

**Overview:** The Management Plan is the prime document which sets out the vision for the Wye Valley National Landscape (NL) area and the priorities for its management.

**Key target:** Sets out a range of objectives which seek to reconcile the competing interests of the environment, the ecology and the social and economic well-being of the AONB (NL).

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Plan Area is not within the Wye Valley AONB (NL).

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### **Herefordshire Big Economic Plan 2023-2050 (2023)**

**Overview:** Aims to increase the economic wealth of Herefordshire by setting out proposals and to support business growth

**Key target:** The document outlines the path and direction to foster economic vitality within Herefordshire. Key objectives therefore include:

- Sustaining business survival and growth
- Increasing wage levels, range and quality of jobs
- Having a skilled population to meet future work needs
- Developing the county's built infrastructure so enterprise can flourish.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Material assets
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** None of merit.

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## **European Union Legislation**

### **The EC Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010)**

**Overview:** These regulations transpose the Habitats Directive in England, Wales and to a limited extent Scotland by ensuring that activities are carried out in accordance with the Habitats Directive, which is to protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild flora and fauna.

**Key target:** The Regulations make it an offence (subject to exceptions) to deliberately capture, kill, disturb, or trade in the animals listed in Schedule 2, or pick, collect, cut, uproot, destroy, or trade in the plants listed in Schedule 4. However, these actions can be made lawful through the granting of licenses by the appropriate authorities.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Cultural heritage and the landscape

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Neighbourhood Plan should be compliant with all the relevant legislation and regulations.

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### **The EC Water Framework Directive (2000)**

**Overview:** Commits all EU member states to achieve good qualitative and quantitative status of all water courses by 2015.

**Key target:** Aims for 'good status' for all ground and surface waters (rivers, lakes, transitional waters, and coastal waters) in the EU

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Neighbourhood Plan should be compliant with all the relevant legislation and regulations.

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## European Union Strategy

### Revised EU Sustainable Development strategy (2009)

**Overview:** Sets out a single strategy on how the EU will more effectively meet its long-standing commitment to meet the challenges of sustainable development.

**Key target:** Recognises the need to gradually change current unsustainable consumption and production patterns and move towards a better integrated approach to policy making. The Strategy sets overall objectives, targets and concrete actions for seven key priority challenges, predominantly environmental:

- Climate change and clean energy;
- Sustainable transport
- Sustainable production and consumption;
- Public health threats;
- Better management of natural resources;
- Social inclusion, demography and migration;
- Fighting global poverty.

### SEA Topics:

- Air
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Neighbourhood Plan should take into account the objectives of the strategy. The aim of sustainable development should be implicit in its approach.

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## Evidence

### Herefordshire Employment Land Study (2019)

**Overview:** Includes employment land assessments for the plan period 2021-2041. The study includes Quantitative and Qualitative assessments of employment land, assessment of market demand and need, as well as providing forecasts and recommendations for future employment need over the plan period.

**Key target:** This study covers existing employment sites in Hereford, the five market towns and their rural hinterlands. There are no strategic employment land allocations within Acton Beauchamp Group at present and so the study does not identify sites which are worthy of continued protection from alternative uses. Nor does it make any recommendations in respect of employment need within the neighbourhood area.

### SEA Topics:

- Material assets
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** None of merit; however, the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP process may wish to explore whether there is any employment need locally and if so whether there is any scope for providing employment land and premises.

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### **Herefordshire Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2019)**

**Overview:** The HELAA aims to justify site allocations in plans by:

- Identifying sites which are capable of delivering housing development
- Assessing sites for their housing potential; and
- Predicting when a site could be developed for housing.

**Key target:** The SHLAA 2019 does not identify any sites within Acton Beauchamps Group area.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The NDP may seek sites through their own Call for Sites to identify possible housing allocation sites.

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### **Herefordshire Housing Market Need Assessment (HMNA) (2021)**

**Overview:** Builds on an earlier Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) developed for Herefordshire. Its purpose is to inform the Local Plan's policies regarding housing need and demand (for market and affordable housing) within each of the 7 Housing Market Areas (HMAs) in Herefordshire between 2021 and 2041

**Key target:** The HMNA uses 7 HMAs as the geography for presenting data. Acton Beauchamp Group falls within the Bromyard HMA.

- There is an annual requirement for 22 affordable dwellings between 2021 and 2041 across the HMA.

The study identifies that, in rural parts of Bromyard HMA, between 2021-2041 there is a need for:

- 47 market houses
- 18 affordable houses.

The study highlights that within the Bromyard HMA the overall estimated housing need by size 2021-2041 is as follows: 1 Bed - 5%, 2 bed - 25%, 3 bed – 50%, 4 bed-20%.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climatic factors
- Cultural heritage

- Flora and fauna
- Population
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The HMNA provides an indication of housing needs and affordability within the Bromyard HMA. It provides evidence that could be used to inform policies or market and affordable housing requirements in the NDP.

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### **Herefordshire Local Housing Requirements Study 2012 (updated in 2014)**

**Overview:** Technical assessment of the housing market and potential future local housing requirements which supports planning policy regarding the amount of growth, housing tenure and housing type needed within Herefordshire up to 2031.

**Key target:** The delivery of 5,300 homes in the rural areas would:

- Support growth in the rural population by 6%
- Increase the number of households by 14.5%

Forecasts also predict that growth in the population of the rural areas is likely to be primarily through an increase in those aged over 75. Moderate growth is expected in the 30-44 and 60-74 age brackets. The Local Housing Requirements Study therefore anticipates continuing improvements in life expectancy; significant growth is expected of those in their 80s, with the existing population in their 40s and 50s moving into retirement. As a consequence, the rural areas will face an increasing urgency to provide more 3-bedroom homes, with more 1 and 2 bed homes required in the affordable sector.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** This study provides an indication of housing requirements in the rural areas and the Bromyard HMA. This evidence can be used to inform the content of the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP, which could include policies to facilitate the provision of the right types of homes in the right places.

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### **Herefordshire Rural Housing Background Report (2013)**

**Overview:** Provides the justification for the proportional housing growth targets outlined in the Core Strategy

**Key target:** There are no settlements within Acton Beauchamp area identified.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Acton Beauchamp group NDP needs to have regard to policy RA3 – Herefordshire’s Countryside

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#### **Herefordshire Draft Gypsies and Travellers Assessment (2016)**

**Overview:** Assesses the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers across Herefordshire.

**Key target:** Key findings from the survey of Gypsy and Traveller households in 2012 found that:

- 31% of households surveyed have some sort of accommodation need
- Of the 17 households with an accommodation need, 7 had a requirement for at least one additional pitch
- 10 households had a requirement for bricks and mortar housing
- There is an additional requirement for 7 pitches and 9 units of Registered Social Landlord accommodation within Herefordshire.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The Acton Beauchamp Group NDP must establish whether any of the need identified in this assessment falls within the neighbourhood area and make appropriate provisions for it.

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#### **Herefordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2007)**

**Overview:** Focuses conservation efforts on the areas within Herefordshire that will result in the greatest benefit for ecological networks, habitats and species.

**Key target:** Integrating biodiversity objectives with other environmental, social and economic needs can provide a sustainable living and working environment that benefits both people and nature.

**SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The NDP can help to achieve the LBAP priorities.

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**Building Biodiversity into the LDF (2009)**

**Overview:** Provides the Council's Local Plan (Core Strategy) with evidence in respect of biodiversity and geodiversity, identifying both opportunities and constraints across Herefordshire.

**Key target:** This document provides useful information in respect of Hereford and the market towns only.

**SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** There is a lack of information about rural areas which means it will be necessary to gather and assess existing biodiversity and geodiversity data, in order to ensure that the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP can overcome any existing constraints and capitalise on opportunities to enhance habitats and their networks.

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**Herefordshire Green and blue Infrastructure Strategy (2023)**

**Overview:** Develops a framework of natural and culturally important features and functions so that planning for a sustainable future is at the heart of planning within Herefordshire.

**Key target:** Establishes policies and principles for the protection and enhancement of those features and functions that contributes to the environment of Herefordshire across a range of scales.

**SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil

- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The study provides evidence that could be taken into account when preparing policies for the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP.

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### **Renewable Energy Study (2010)**

**Overview:** Assesses the energy demand within Herefordshire and the ability for the county to accommodate renewable and low carbon energy technologies.

**Key target:** The total energy demand excluding transport for Herefordshire, at that point in time, was calculated as being:

- Electrical: 731 GWh/yr
- Heat: 1,810 GWh/yr
- Total: 2,541 GWh/yr

There is scope for all types of renewable energy production.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Air
- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Soil
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The study provides evidence that could be taken into account when preparing policies for the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP.

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### **Herefordshire Playing Pitch Assessment (2012)**

**Overview:** Produces a strategic framework, audit and assessment and needs analysis of outdoor sports pitches and facilities for Herefordshire. The document arises as a result of a recommendation in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sports Facilities Framework to develop local standards for playing fields and sports pitches throughout Herefordshire.

**Key target:** The study updates components of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sports Facilities Framework 2010 such as updating population forecasts, setting local standards for synthetic turf pitches and grass playing fields within Herefordshire. It identifies any current gaps in provision and looks forward to 2031 to assess what facilities are likely to be required by that date. There are no playing pitches within Acton Beauchamp Group.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Cultural heritage and the landscape

- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The study provides evidence that could be taken into account when preparing policies for the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP. Additional local evidence may be required to identify if there is a need for any secured playing pitch facilities within the Group Parish.

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### **Open Spaces Assessment (2023)**

**Overview:** The 2023 space assessment of need is a snapshot of the quality, quantity and distribution of open space across Herefordshire.

**Key target:** The study reveals that 70% of rural settlements do not have access to open space within 5-minutes. The study recommends that more open space areas are designated and are accessible.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The open space audit and assessment of does not give a specific indication of open space shortfalls and surpluses in Acton Beauchamp Group NDP.

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### **Play Facilities Study (2006)**

**Overview:** The Play Facilities Study 2012 updates the previous play facilities analysis under the Open Spaces Study 2006 and provides guidance and a framework for the development, delivery and continued sustainability of providing new and improved play facilities for children and young people in Herefordshire to 2031.

**Key target:** Acton Beauchamp Group has a population of under 500, with no formal play provision.

#### **SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Cultural heritage and the landscape
- Flora and fauna
- Material assets
- Population and human health

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** The study provides evidence that could be taken into account when preparing policies for the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP.

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**Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Water Cycle Study, part 1 (2019)**

**Overview:** The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) provides a summary of flood risk in Herefordshire to inform the location of future development. The Water Cycle Study examines how water resources and water supply infrastructure, wastewater treatment, water quality, sewerage and flood risk could constrain growth across Herefordshire.

**Key target:** Acton Beauchamp Group is in the Frome River catchment. There are identified areas of flooding. Much of Acton Beauchamp Group falls outside of fluvial flood risk.

**SEA Topics:**

- Biodiversity
- Climate factors
- Material assets
- Population and human health
- Water

**Implications for the NDP and SEA:** New development proposed through the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP should be assessed against the capacity of local infrastructure. Up-to-date flood risk information should be gathered from the Environment Agency, in order to ensure that any flood risks are considered when preparing the Acton Beauchamp Group NDP.

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# Baseline information for Acton Beauchamp Group

*N.B. This is based on countywide baseline information with some additions relevant to Acton Beauchamp Group. Where no locally specific data is available for current status, trends and targets, only countywide data is reported. Any gaps in data may be filled following additional research.*

## SA Objective 13. Value, maintain, restore and expand county biodiversity

### **Proposed Indicator: Net change in condition of SSSIs across Herefordshire**

**Current Status:** The 2011-2013 AMR does not contain updated conservation data. 2010/11: 27% of Herefordshire's SSSI land was in favourable condition. Within Acton Beauchamp Group there are 0 SSSIs.

**Trends:** 2006: 22% 2007: 22% 2008: 22% 2010: 24 %

Proportion of SSSI land that was in unfavourable condition but recovering increased between 2010 and 2012 going from 41% to 65%.

Proportion in unfavourable and declining condition had also decreased from 4% to 1%.

**Targets:** Not applicable for Acton Beauchamp Group

**Issues and Constraints:** Herefordshire's SSSIs are in extremely poor condition relative to England as whole, where 96.1% of all SSSI land was in favourable condition in April 2014. The proportion of SSSI in unfavourable condition but recovering is greater than England as a whole, where the figure currently stands at 58.6%.

**Baseline (information) source:** Understanding Herefordshire: An integrated needs assessment (January 2025). NE & DEFRA Website March 2025

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### **Proposed Indicator: After use of mineral sites especially wildlife habitat creation**

**Current Status:** *There is no countywide or locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** Not available

**Issues and Constraints:** Not available

**Baseline (information) source:** Not available

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### **Proposed Indicator: Phosphate levels within the River Wye SAC and adjoining tributaries that receive increased phosphates from proportional growth.**

**Current Status:** Countywide data is available, this would apply to Acton Beauchamp Group due to the River Frome leading to the River Lugg.

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** Not available

**Issues and Constraints:** The NDP area is within the River Lugg Catchment

**Baseline (information) source:** Nutrient Management Plan

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**Proposed Indicator:** Changes to protected habitats and impacts of species within the Herefordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

**Current Status:** The 2011-2013 AMR does not contain updated conservation data. 2010/11: 17 Habitat Action Plans and 14 Species Action Plans are currently in operation across Herefordshire. *There is no locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** There are no formal records of any unacceptable adverse impacts on habitats or protected species. Originally 156 Priority Species were identified for inclusion in Herefordshire's LBAP. Similarly Herefordshire's LBAP covered 23 habitats with Action Plans.

**Targets:** To protect and where possible enhance the habitats of protected species identified. No net losses.

**Issues and Constraints:** Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) holds limited data on some individual sites.

**Baseline (information) source:** Herefordshire Council AMR (2010/11)

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**Proposed Indicator:** Changes in the areas of designated nature conservation sites as a consequence of planning permission.

**Current Status:** Acton Beauchamp Group has:

SSSI: 0

LWS: 8

There are no SACs, NNRs, SINCs and LNRs within the parish.

**Trends:** As of 2025, there had been no change in the areas of designated nature conservation sites as a consequence of the planning permissions granted.

**Targets:** To capitalise on opportunities to enhance the areas of value to nature conservation as much as possible.

**Issues and Constraints:** Herefordshire Biological Records Centre (HBRC) holds limited data on some individual sites.

**Baseline (information) source:** Herefordshire Council Initial Screening Report for the Neighbourhood Plan 2025

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**Proposed Indicator:** Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has or is being implemented.

**Current Status:** The NDP Area has the following landscape types:

Herefordshire Plateau, Herefordshire Lowlands.

**Trends:** Not Available

**Targets:** No specific targets identified.

**Issues and Constraints:** Not Available

**Baseline (information) source:** Herefordshire Landscape Character Assessment (2023)

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## **SEA Objective 14. Use natural resources and energy more efficiently**

**Proposed Indicator:** Maintaining Herefordshire Council's County Site and Monuments Register.

**Current Status:** Countywide data would be too large to incorporate into this template. Whilst there is no qualitative, locally specific data available at present, there are 0 scheduled monuments in Acton Beauchamp Group according to the latest version of the register.

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** No specific targets identified, but need to ensure that the register is kept up to date.

**Issues and Constraints:** Should be monitored through AMR following the adoption of the Core Strategy, in line with SA recommendations.

**Baseline (information) source:** Herefordshire Environmental Records Register (search Jan 2025).

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**Proposed Indicator: Monitoring changes to historic landscapes.**

**Current Status:** Historic Landscape Character assessments have only been undertaken for Hereford City. Rapid townscape Assessments (2010) were only undertaken for Hereford, Ledbury and Ross.

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** No specific targets identified.

**Issues and Constraints:** Should be monitored through AMR following the adoption of the Core Strategy, in line with SA recommendations.

**Baseline (information) source:** Historic Landscape Character Assessment for Hereford. Rapid townscape Assessments (2010)

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## **SEA Objective 15. Value, protect, enhance and restore the landscape quality of Herefordshire, including its rural areas and open spaces.**

**Proposed Indicator: Number of developments meeting and surpassing national design standards.**

**Current Status:** *There is no countywide or locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** No specific targets identified.

**Issues and Constraints:** Should be monitored through AMR following the adoption of the Core Strategy, in line with SA recommendations.

**Baseline (information) source:**

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**Proposed Indicator: The need for, frequency and outcomes of planning enforcement investigations/ planning appeals concerning aspects of local loss of heritage assets and locally important buildings particularly within a conservation area.**

**Current Status:** Countywide data would be too large to incorporate into this template. There are no outstanding enforcement actions or appeals concerning local loss of heritage assets and locally important buildings within Acton Beauchamp Group

**Trends:** No historic records of any planning enforcement action or appeals concerning locally important buildings within the NDP Area

**Targets:** To wherever possible improve upon or otherwise maintain current status.

**Issues and Constraints:** Current status must be verified by Development Management and Enforcement Officers, but the NDP can help to avoid enforcement action and appeals during the plan period.

**Baseline (information) source:** Council Development Management records (searched February 2025)

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## **SEA Objective 16. Reduce Herefordshire's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change as well as its contribution to the problem.**

**Proposed Indicator: Transport patronage by mode**

**Current Status:** % of Herefordshire residents who travel to work by:

Car: 70.1%  
Foot: 14.7%  
Bicycle: 4.3%  
Bus: 2%  
Train: 0.8%  
Motorbike: 0.8%  
Taxi: 0.3%  
Other: 7%

*There is no locally specific data available at present*

**Trends:** The number of people cycling or travelling by bus as the main form transport to get to work declined between 2001 and 2011 – across England and Wales there was little change in either. Walking or driving a car or van on the other hand increased.

**Targets:** To encourage the take up of lesser polluting modes of transport.

**Issues and Constraints:** There are a lack of transport options for many rural communities and therefore high car ownership and dependency – the last decade has seen a 15 per cent increase in household car ownership, although this is not reflected in traffic flows of recent years with volumes in Hereford City and wider county having decreased. The proportion of people working from home increased over the decade from 15 per cent in 2001 to 17 per cent in 2011.

**Baseline (information) source:** 2011 Census

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**Proposed Indicator: Number of decentralised energy schemes granted permission.**

**Current Status:** *There is no countywide or locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** To contribute towards the national target.

**Issues and Constraints:** Should be monitored through AMR following the adoption of the Core Strategy, in line with SA recommendations.

**Baseline (information) source:**

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**Proposed Indicator: Total CO2 emissions per capita**

**Current Status:** Latest figure dates back to 2010: 1.61 million tonnes (mtCO<sup>2</sup>) There is no locally specific data available at present.

**Trends:** Between 2005 and 2010 Herefordshire's total and per capita carbon emission reduced by 7% and 8% respectively; while UK's total and per capita carbon emission reduced by 8% and 12% respectively within the same period. This trend hides an increase in emissions between 2009 and 2010 when total emissions in the county increased by 5% the same as across the UK (+5%).

**Targets:** To reduce the overall carbon emissions.

**Issues and Constraints:** CO<sup>2</sup> emissions produced are decreasing.

**Baseline (information) source:** Understanding Herefordshire: An integrated needs assessment (June 2013).

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## **SEA Objective 17. Reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public wellbeing, the economy and the environment.**

**Proposed Indicator:** Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood defence grounds.

**Current Status:** *There is no locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** There have been no approvals contrary to EA advice since reporting began in 2004.

**Targets:** To have no applications permitted contrary to EA advice.

**Issues and Constraints:** None identified.

**Baseline (information) source:** Herefordshire Council AMR (2023/24)

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## **SEA Objective 18. Minimise local and global pollution and protect or enhance environmental resources.**

**Proposed Indicator:** Agricultural land usage by quality. LA to monitor the number of hectares of the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 3a and higher) lost to development.

**Current Status:** The agricultural land classification around Acton Beauchamp Group is mainly Grade 2 and 3.

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** Measure the number of hectares of best and most versatile soil lost through development.

**Issues and Constraints:** Should be monitored through AMR following the adoption of the Core Strategy, in line with SA recommendations.

**Baseline (information) source:** DEFRA 'Magic' website for land classification 2019

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**Proposed Indicator:** Percentage of river length assessed as good or very good chemical quality and ecological quality as required by the Water Framework Directive

**Current Status:** Latest figures for the county as a whole dates back to 2005 when there was considered to be 84% assessed as good or very good. This represents a decrease in the % since 2002. *There is no locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** Figure steadily improved before going into decline:

Herefordshire 1999 85.9%,

2000 89.5%, 2001 92.2%,

2002 91.8%

**Targets:** To ensure that rivers meet their conservation objectives and do not fall below the required standard of quality.

**Issues and Constraints:** The River Wye does not border the NDP area, however, the NDP area is within the Lugg catchment.

**Baseline (information) source:** The State of Herefordshire (2007) Water Framework Directive (2000)

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## **SEA Objective 19. Ensure integrated, efficient and balanced land use.**

**Proposed Indicator:** Percentage of all new development completed on previously developed land.

**Current Status:** 2010/11: 67% 2011-13: 57% 2013-14: 65% *There is no locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** Completions on PDL had risen to 71% by 2005.

**Targets:** To increase the number of homes built on PDL in line with the provisions of national planning policy.

**Issues and Constraints:** The number of brownfield completions has fallen slightly in recent years, though this is probably the offshoot of tough market conditions.

**Baseline (information) source:** Herefordshire Council AMR (2023/24)

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**Proposed Indicator:** Housing densities in urban and rural areas

**Current Status:** *There is no countywide or locally specific data available at present.*

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** No specific targets identified.

**Issues and Constraints:** Should be monitored through AMR following the adoption of the Core Strategy, in line with SA recommendations.

**Baseline (information) source:**

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**Proposed Indicator:** Level of development in urban areas compared to rural.

**Current Status:** *There is no countywide or locally specific data available at present.* This indicator would not be applicable to rural NDPs.

**Trends:** Not available

**Targets:** Not available

**Issues and Constraints:** Not available

**Baseline (information) source:** Not available

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## **SEA Objective 20. Value, protect and enhance the character and built quality of settlements and neighbourhoods and the county's heritage assets, including conservation areas, historic environment and cultural heritage.**

**Proposed Indicator:** Number and percentage of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments on Buildings at Risk Register (English Heritage).

**Current Status:** There are numerous listed buildings within the parish and 0 SAMs. None are currently recorded in the Buildings at Risk Register.

**Trends:** There were 79 heritage assets in Herefordshire that were considered to be at high risk and included in the Heritage at Risk Register 2024.

**Targets:** To wherever possible improve upon or otherwise maintain current status. (If heritage is at risk include-promote opportunities to achieve the removal of heritage assets from the at risk register.

**Issues and Constraints:** None of Acton Beauchamp Group's listed buildings or SAMs are considered to be at risk at present.

**Baseline (information) source:** Buildings at Risk Register (English Heritage; search February 2025)

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**Proposed Indicator:** The need for, frequency and outcomes of planning enforcement investigations/planning appeals concerning aspects of local loss of heritage assets, locally important buildings within the parish and particularly within a conservation area.

**Current Status:** Countywide data would be too large to incorporate into this template. There are no outstanding enforcement actions or appeals concerning local loss of heritage assets locally important buildings

**Trends:** No historic records of any planning enforcement action or appeals concerning locally important buildings

**Targets:** To wherever possible improve upon or otherwise maintain current status

**Issues and Constraints:** Current status must be verified by Dvt Mgt and Enforcement Officers, but the NDP can help to avoid enforcement action and appeals during the plan period.

**Baseline (information) source:** Council Dvt Mgt records (searched February 2025)

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# Environmental issues identified from the Acton Beauchamp Group baseline

These environmental issues are the same as most of those identified for the Herefordshire Core Strategy<sup>1</sup>

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## SEA Topics

### 1. Air

#### Environmental Issues:

- High reliance upon the private car causing high levels of air pollution and in Hereford in particular
- Need to reduce carbon emissions by encouraging alternative modes of travel.

**SA Objectives:** Objective 16

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### 2. Biodiversity

#### Environmental Issues:

- Habitats and species of national, regional and local importance are under pressure from the adaptation and diversification of farming and forestry employment.
- Habitats and species of national, regional and local importance are under pressure from development
- Minimise loss of biodiversity and expand opportunities for wildlife everywhere.

**SA Objectives:** Objectives 13 & 15

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### 3. Climate factors

#### Environmental Issues:

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions through planning, design and build.

**SA Objectives:** Objective 16

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### 4. Cultural Heritage

#### Environmental Issues:

- Acton Beauchamp Group has numerous heritage assets all of which require ongoing protection and many in need of high levels of maintenance.

**SA Objectives:** Objective 20

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### 5. Flora and Fauna

#### Environmental Issues:

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from the Pre-submission Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal Assessment (May 2014) and LDF General Scoping Report (June 2007)



- Conserve and enhance the character and quality of historic landscapes, including all types of natural flora and fauna.

**SA Objectives:** Objective 15

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## 6. Material Assets

### **Environmental Issues:**

- How the countryside can continue to be managed in an economically, socially and environmentally beneficial way in the face of continuing pressures on traditional farming.

**SA Objectives:** Objectives 14 & 18

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## 7. Population

### **Environmental Issues:**

- Minimise energy waste through good designs, which help to reduce energy consumption and maximise efficiency.
- Need to avoid enforcement investigations/action concerning locally important buildings and those within conservation areas in particular.

**SA Objectives:** Objective 15

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## 8. Soil

### **Environmental Issues:**

- Promoting development of previously developed land and buildings as opposed to greenfield sites or agricultural land of the highest quality.

**SA Objectives:** Objectives 18 & 19

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## 9. Water

### **Environmental Issues:**

- Issues relating to availability of resources, foul drainage, pollution, and abstraction in a county which supports water dependent biodiversity of international and national importance, given the predicted climate change consequences for water availability and demanding projections for new housing.
- Steady decline in the chemical quality of rivers over the last 10 years.

**SA Objectives:** Objectives 17 & 18

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# SEA Framework SEA Objectives, Indicators, Targets

Parish Council Name: Acton Beauchamp Group

Neighbourhood Development Plan Name: Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Plan

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## SEA Topics

### SEA Topic: Nature Conservation (Biodiversity, flora and fauna)

**SA Objective:** Value, maintain, restore or expand county biodiversity. Value, protect, enhance or restore the landscape quality of Herefordshire, including its rural areas and open spaces.

**SEA Objective:** To maintain and enhance nature conservation (biodiversity, flora and fauna)

#### Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:

- Protect or enhance habitats of international, national, regional or local importance.
- Protect international, national, regional or locally important terrestrial or aquatic species.
- Maintain wildlife corridors and minimise fragmentation of ecological areas and green spaces.
- Manage access to sites in a sustainable way that protects or enhances their nature conservation value.
- Create new appropriate habitats.
- Value, enhance and protect natural environmental assets including AONB's, historic landscapes, open spaces, parks and gardens and their settings
- Encourage local stewardship of local environments, for example by promoting best practices in agricultural management
- Ensure that environmental impacts caused by mineral operations and the transport of minerals are minimised.
- Promote the use of rural areas and open space by all, encourage easy non-car based access, and accommodate the needs of disabled users.

**Indicators:** Net change in condition of SSSIs across Herefordshire. After use of mineral sites especially wildlife habitat creation. Changes to protected habitats and impacts of species within the Herefordshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

**Targets:** % of SSSI land in favourable condition (Increase), % of SSSI land in unfavourable condition but recovering (Increase), % of SSSI land in unfavourable condition and declining (Decrease). Percentage of opportunities taken. To protect and where possible enhance the habitats of protected species identified. No net losses

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### SEA Topic: Landscape

**SA Objective:** Not covered in SA

**SEA Objective:** To maintain and enhance the quality of landscapes and townscapes. To improve quality of surroundings

#### Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:

- Protect and enhance the landscape everywhere and particularly in designated areas
- Value and protect diversity and local distinctiveness

- Improve landscape and ecological quality and character of the countryside
- Improve the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open space
- Improve satisfaction of people with their neighbourhoods as places to live
- Decrease litter and graffiti in towns and countryside
- Result in the loss of open space

**Indicators:** Changes in the areas of designated nature conservation sites as a consequence of planning permission. Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has or is being implemented. Monitoring changes to historic landscapes. Area resulting in a loss of open space as a result of planning permission

**Targets:** To capitalise on opportunities to enhance the areas of value to nature conservation as much as possible. No specific targets identified.

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### **SEA Topic: Heritage**

**SA Objective:** Value, protect or enhance the character and built quality of settlements and neighbourhoods and the county's heritage assets, historic environment and cultural heritage.

**SEA Objective:** To conserve and where appropriate enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and culture heritage

#### **Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:**

- Preserve, protect and enhance heritage assets including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological sites and other culturally important features in both urban and rural settings.
- Prevent development which is inappropriate in scale, form or design to its setting or to its function or local area.
- Encourage development that creates and sustains well-designed, high quality-built environments that incorporate green space, encourage biodiversity and promote local distinctiveness and sense of place.
- Encourage cleanliness and/or improve the general appearance of the area

**Indicators:** The need for, frequency and outcomes of planning enforcement investigations/ planning appeals concerning the aspects of local loss of locally important buildings within a conservation area. Number and percentage of listed buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments on Buildings at Risk Register (English Heritage). Ensure that Herefordshire Council's Sites and Monuments Register is kept up to date.

**Targets:** To improve upon or otherwise maintain current status. To improve upon or otherwise maintain current status. No specific targets identified, but need to ensure that the register is kept up to date.

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### **SEA Topic: Air and Climate**

**SA Objective:** Minimise local and global pollution and protect or enhance environmental resources. Reduce Herefordshire's vulnerability to the impacts of climate change as well as its contribution to the problem.

**SEA Objective:** To improve air quality. To reduce the effect of traffic on the environment. To reduce contributions to climate change. To reduce vulnerability to climate change

#### **Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:**

- Minimise water, air, soil, groundwater, noise and light pollution from current activities and the potential for such pollution.
- Protect or enhance the quality of watercourses.

- Provide opportunities to improve soil quality or reduce contaminated land.
- Reduce the county's contribution to climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport, domestic, commercial and industrial sources.
- Increase the proportion of energy generated from renewable and low carbon sources including by micro-generation, Combined Heat and Power (CHP), district heating and in transportation.

**Indicators:** Transport patronage by mode. Number of decentralised energy schemes granted permission. Total CO2 emissions per capita

**Targets:** To increase the take up of alternative modes to the private car. To contribute towards the national target. To reduce the overall carbon emissions.

---

### **SEA Topic: Water**

**SA Objective:** Reduce the risk of flooding and the resulting detriment to public well-being, the economy and the environment. Minimise local and global pollution and protect or enhance environmental resources.

**SEA Objective:** To improve water quality. To provide for sustainable sources of water supply. To avoid, reduce and manage flood risk

#### **Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:**

- Reduce flood risk both presently and taking into account climate change.
- Prevent inappropriate development of the floodplain, and include flood protection systems.
- Include sustainable urban drainage systems where appropriate.
- Minimise water, air, soil, groundwater, noise and light pollution from current activities and the potential for such pollution.
- Protect or enhance the quality of watercourses.

**Indicators:** Number of planning permissions

granted contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood defence grounds. Percentage of river length assessed as good or very good chemical quality and ecological quality. Phosphate levels within the River Wye SAC and adjoining tributaries that receive increased phosphates from proportional growth.

**Targets:** To have no applications permitted contrary to EA advice. To ensure that rivers meet their conservation objectives and do not fall below the required standard of quality as set out in the Water Framework Directive. To meet the targets set out in the Nutrient Management Plan (2020).

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### **SEA Topic: Soil**

**SA Objective:** Minimise local and global pollution and protect or enhance environmental resources. Ensure integrated, efficient and balanced land use.

**SEA Objective:** To conserve soil resources and quality. Ensure integrated, efficient and balanced land use.

#### **Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:**

- Minimise water, air, soil, groundwater, noise and light pollution from current activities and the potential for such pollution.
- Provide opportunities to improve soil quality or reduce contaminated land.
- Ensure new developments are in appropriate locations, optimising the use of previously developed land and buildings, primarily focussed on the urban areas and are accessible by walking, cycling or sustainable transport and/or will increase the share of these transport modes, thereby reducing the need to travel.

**Indicators:** Percentage of all new development completed on previously developed land. Amount of land identified as best and most versatile agricultural land lost to development.

**Targets:** To increase the number of homes built on PDL in line with the provisions of national planning policy. Measure the number of hectares of best and most versatile soil lost through development.

---

**SEA Topic: Population and Human Health**

**SA Objective:** Value, protect, enhance or restore the landscape quality of Herefordshire, including its rural areas and open spaces.

**SEA Objective:** To improve health of the population. To reduce crime and nuisance

**Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:**

- Value, enhance and protect natural environmental assets including AONB's, historic landscapes, open spaces, parks and gardens and their settings.
- Encourage local stewardship of local environments, for example by promoting best practices in agricultural management.
- Ensure that environmental impacts caused by mineral operations and the transport of minerals are minimised.
- Promote the use of rural areas and open space by all, encourage easy non-car based access, and accommodate the needs of disabled users.

**Indicators:** Number of developments meeting and surpassing national design

**Targets:** No specific targets identified.

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**SEA Topic: Material Assets**

**SA Objective:** Use natural resources and energy more efficiently. Minimise local and global pollution and protect or enhance environmental resources.

**SEA Objective:** To conserve natural and manmade resources

**Sub-objectives/Appraisal Questions:**

- Maximise energy efficiency and minimise the consumption of non-renewable energy i.e. from fossil fuels.
- Minimise the consumption of water, land, soil, minerals, aggregates and other raw materials by all? E.g. through integrated transport, sustainable resource-efficient design, local sourcing of food, goods, materials.
- Encourage the re-use/enhancement (to high standards of sustainable resource-efficient design) of existing buildings and minimise the need for new build.
- Encourage the use of clean technologies and water minimisation techniques.

**Indicators:** The need for, frequency and outcomes of planning enforcement investigations/ planning appeals concerning the aspects of local loss of locally important buildings within a conservation area. Maintaining Herefordshire Council's County Site and Monuments Register. Monitoring changes to historic landscapes. Agricultural land usage by quality

**Targets:** Measure the number of hectares of best and most versatile soil lost through development. No specific targets identified. No specific targets identified, but need to ensure that the register is kept up to date.

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# Appendix 1

# Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Notification

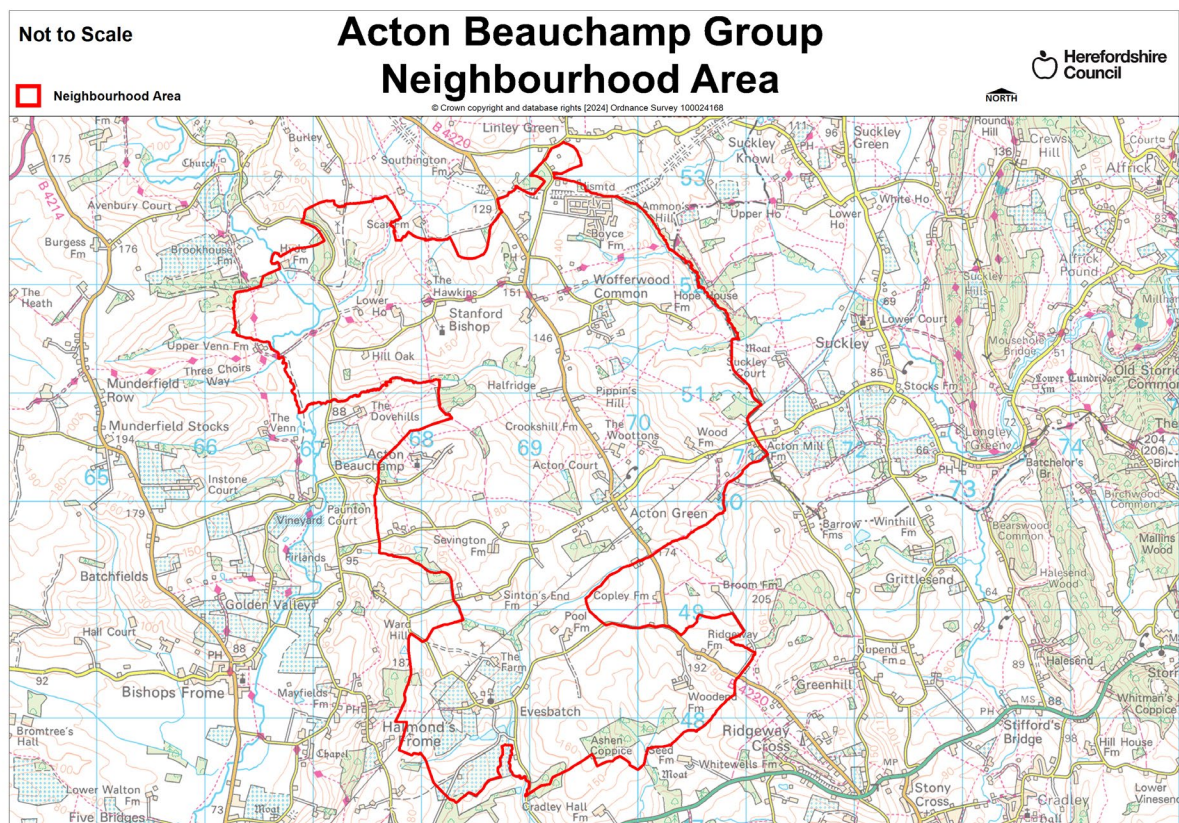
The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 (Reg. 32)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)

**Neighbourhood Area:** Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Area

**Parish Council:** Acton Beauchamp Group Parish Council

**Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:** 22 August 2024



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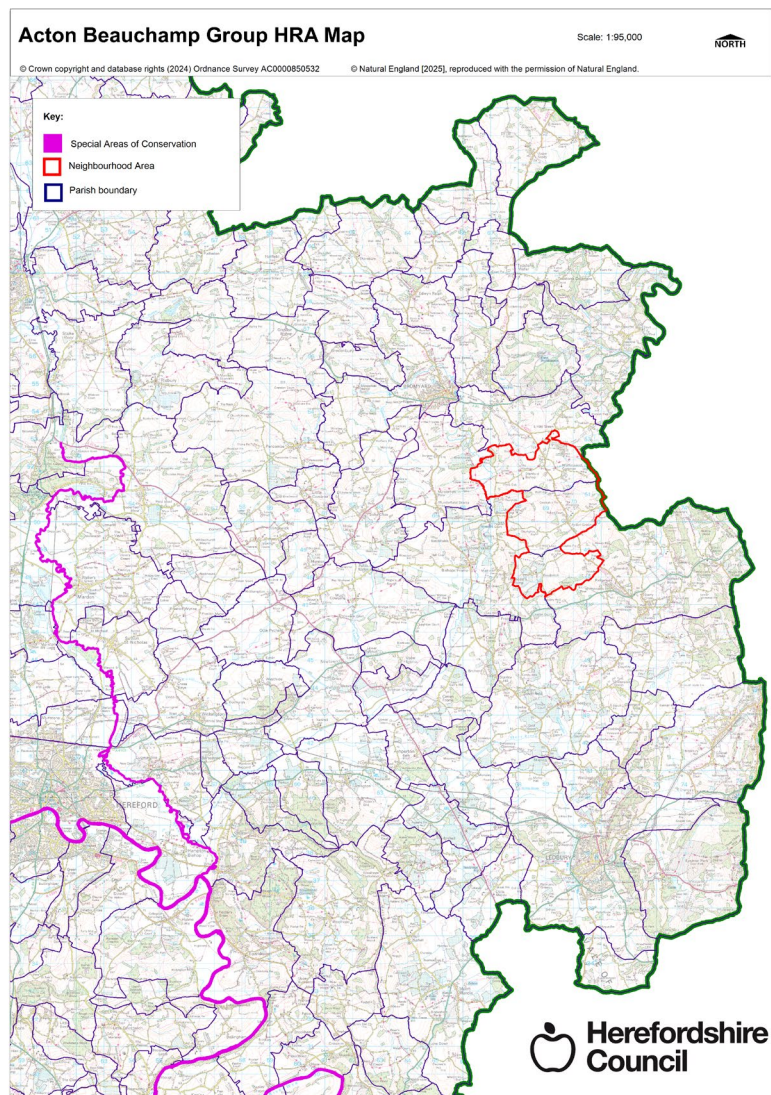
## Introduction

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

The below map shows the relationship between the Neighbourhood Area with European Sites (map not to scale).





### River Wye (including the River Lugg) Special Area of Conservation (SAC):

HRA Information Required	Yes/No	Notes
Does the Neighbourhood Area have the River Wye (including the River Lugg) in or next to its boundary?	N	The River Wye (including the Lugg) SAC is 12.5km away from the neighbourhood area.
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye SAC?	N	The neighbourhood area is not within the Wye catchment area.
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the River Lugg hydrological catchment area?	Y	The neighbourhood area is partly within the River Frome (leading to the Lugg) catchment area.
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	Y	There is mains drainage at Acton Beauchamp and Stanford Bishop.

### Downton Gorge SAC:

HRA Information Required	Yes/No	Notes
Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	N	Downton Gorge SAC is 31.4km away from the neighbourhood area.

### River Clun SAC:

HRA Information Required	Yes/No	Notes
Does the River Clun border the Neighbourhood Area	N	The River Clun SAC does not border the neighbourhood area.

### Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC:

HRA Information Required	Yes/No	Notes
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 Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC is 27.1km away from the neighbourhood area.

### Wye Valley Woodlands SAC:

HRA Information Required	Yes/No	Notes
Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley Woodlands Site?	N	The Wye Valley Woodlands SAC is 34.5km away from the neighbourhood area

### HRA Conclusion:

The assessment above highlights that European Sites will need to be taken into account in the future Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Area and a full HRA Screening will be required.

### European Site

(List only those which are relevant)

River Wye (including the River Lugg) Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

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

The following environmental features are within or in general proximity to the Acton Beauchamp Group 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.

### Environmental features within Neighbourhood Area:

SEA Features	Total Number	Name
Ancient Woodland	25	Hide Wood, Hide Wood Ashbed; Clater Coppice; Coppice; Halletts Hill Coppice; Court Coppice; Heathfield Coppice; Pear Tree Ashbed; Silkcroft Wood; Hallets Orles and Powick Ham; Bach Coppice; Long Coppice; Heath Grove; Birches Coppice; Camp Coppice; Hamstall Coppice; Lowe Coppice; Point Coppice & Yagtree Dingle; Ashen Coppice; The Coppice; Merrells Wood; Merrells Coppice; Ash Bed; Evesbatch Coppice; Peltwell Ashbelt; Puckhills Coppice.

<b>SEA Features</b>	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Name</b>
National Landscapes (formally AONB)	0	-
Conservation Areas	0	-
Flood Areas	N/A	Flood Zones 2 and 3 are in the northwest and south of the Neighbourhood Area.
Geopark	1	Malvern Hills Geopark
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous listed buildings throughout the Neighbourhood Area.
Local Geological Sites (LGS)	0	-
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	8	River Frome; Woodend Coppice; Tinkers Castle Meadow; Mill Coppice Complex; Camp Coppice; Riley Hill Wood, Blackhouse Rough & Broom Coppice; Ashen & Yewberry Coppices; Merrells Wood.
Mineral Reserves	0	-
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	0	-
Nature Trails	2	Bromyard Walks; Herefordshire Trail.
Registered Parks and Gardens	0	-
Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)	0	-
Sites of Importance in Nature Conservation (SINC)	0	-
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	0	-
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	0	-
Unregistered parks and gardens	0	-

### Environmental features bordering Neighbourhood Area:

SEA Features	Total Number	Name
Ancient Woodland	30	Ash Bed; Lower Coppice; Hill Bank Coppice; Rough Coppice; Cockhill Ashbed; The Ash Bed; Brookhouse Wood; Birchen Coppice; Ox Leasow Ashbed; Trump Hopyard and Ashbed; Sally Bed Coppice; Ash Coppice; Pear Tree Ashbed; Dingle; Dipley Wood; Archenhills Wood; Mill Coppice; Silly Land; Riley Hill Wood; Little Riley Hill Wood; Selbrook Ashbed; Little Grove Coppice; Trippers Coppice; Mill Bank Coppice; Penshill Coppice; Foxhall Coppice; Leitchcroft Coppice; Seed Wood; Cheyney Court Wood; Pullen Coppice.
National Landscapes (formally AONB)	0	-
Conservation Areas	0	-

<b>SEA Features</b>	<b>Total Number</b>	<b>Name</b>
Geopark	0	-
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous listed buildings bordering the Neighbourhood Area.
Local Geological Sites (LGS)	4	Ward Hill, Bishops Frome; Linton Tile Works, Linton; Bearswood Common; Highfield, Cradley
Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)	7	Brookhouse Wood; Field at Barnetts Farm; Cheyney Court Wood; Field near Evesbatch Coppice; Field near The Majors Arms; Field near Ward Hill; Swill Meadow;
Mineral Reserves	5	Stretton Grandison to Canon Frome to Bishops Frome; South of Winthill Farm; Nupend Farm; South of Beanhouse Farm; Northeast of Homend Farm
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	0	-
Nature Trails	0	-
Registered Parks and Gardens	0	-
Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)	1	Avenbury Church.
Sites of Importance in Nature Conservation (SINC)	0	-
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	4	Clater Park; Birchyfield; Leadon Court; Halesend.
Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)	0	-
Unregistered parks and gardens	0	-

**Decision Notification:**

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Acton Beauchamp Group Neighbourhood Area will require further environmental assessment for Habitats Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental Assessment.

**Assessment date:** 31 January 2025

**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. This is based on the site's 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.

<b>Downton Gorge</b>
<b>Site Features:</b> Tilio-Acerion forests of slopes, screes and ravines
<b>Vulnerability data:</b> 10km for air quality associated with poultry units or other intensive agricultural practices.
<b>River Clun</b>
<b>Site Features:</b> Freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>
<b>Vulnerability data:</b> Water quality is important to maintain the site feature. Parishes either side of the River Clun will be affected.
<b>River Wye</b>
<b>Site Features:</b> Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculus fluitans</i> and <i>Callitriche-Batrachion</i> vegetation. Transition mires and quaking bogs. White-clawed (or Atlantic Stream) crayfish <i>Austroptamobius 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>
<b>Vulnerability data:</b> 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.
<b>Water Quality:</b> 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. <b>Otters:</b> "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."

### 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.



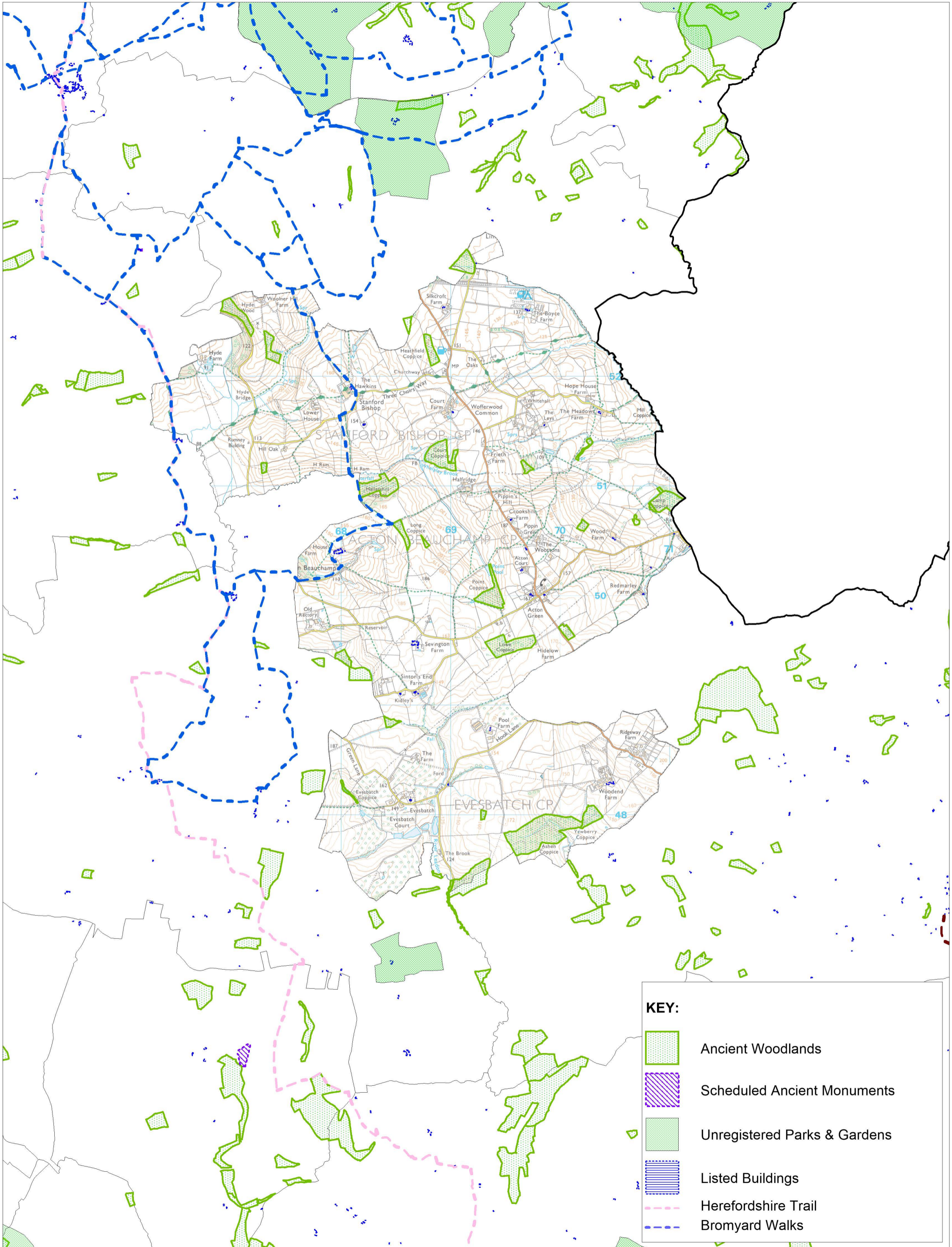


# Acton Beauchamp Group SEA Map 1









SCALE: 1:30,000

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**KEY:**

-  Ancient Woodlands
-  Scheduled Ancient Monuments
-  Unregistered Parks & Gardens
-  Listed Buildings
-  Herefordshire Trail
-  Bromyard Walks



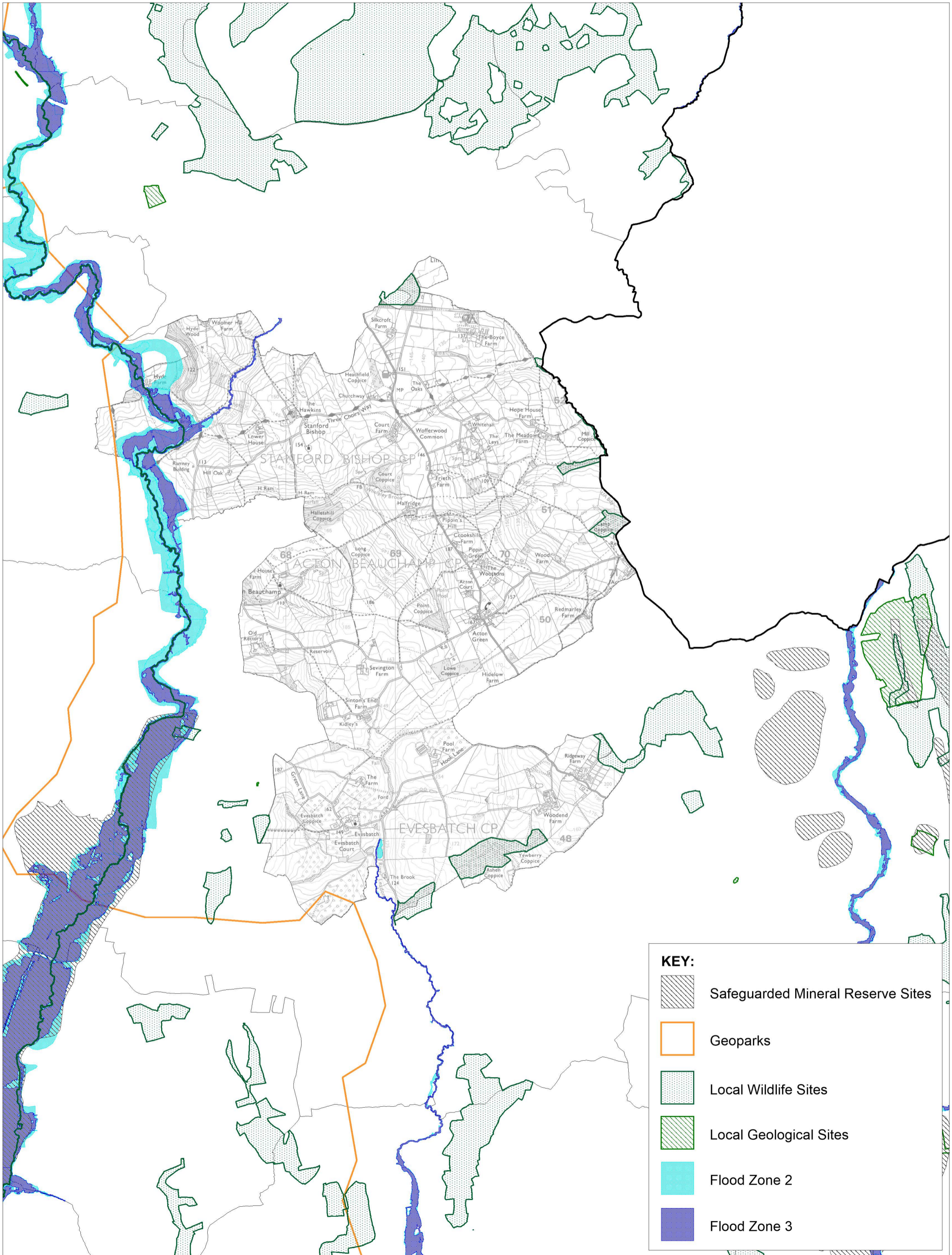
# Acton Beauchamp Group SEA Map 2









**Herefordshire  
Council**

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**KEY:**

-  Safeguarded Mineral Reserve Sites
-  Geoparks
-  Local Wildlife Sites
-  Local Geological Sites
-  Flood Zone 2
-  Flood Zone 3