

Habitats Regulations Assessment



Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Neighbourhood Area

July 2015

Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior HRA

HRA Screening Assessment

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Screening Assessment relates to a Neighbourhood Development Plan that is considered to be in general conformity with higher level strategic plans, such as the Herefordshire Core Strategy and the National planning Policy Framework. The screening stage involves assessing broadly whether the Draft Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European site(s).
- 1.2 Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior group Parish, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the Parish up to 2031. This HRA reviews the Draft Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan (July 2015, being assessed).
- 1.3 The NDP has identified settlement boundaries within Stoke Prior, Risbury and Steen's Bridge to provide up to 43 houses in sites within the settlement boundaries. It provides general policies that clarify and provide detail to the policies within the Herefordshire Core Strategy therefore it requires a high level screening assessment to build upon the HRA Screening Assessment Report for the Herefordshire Core Strategy. Therefore this high level screening assessment should be read in combination with the Herefordshire Pre-submission publication of the Local Plan-Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment Report (April 2014) and ensures that there will not be any significant impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.4 This high level screening assessment, which should be read in conjunction with the Pre submission publication of the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy), together with the Proposed Main Modifications (March 2015) and Habitat Regulations Assessment Report (published in April 2015), ensures that there will not be any significant impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.5 The map below shows Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Area with the European Site highlighted.



Figure 1- Humber Ford and Stoke Prior HRA Map

- 2.0 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment of neighbourhood plans**
- 2.1 The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the “Habitats Regulations” published for England and Wales in July 2007 and updated in 2013. Therefore, when preparing its NDP, Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Parish Council is required by law to carry out an assessment known as “Habitats Regulations Assessment”. It is also a requirement in Regulation 32 schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive provides that:
Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.
- 2.3 HRA is an impact-led assessment and refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a neighbourhood plan on one or more European sites, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):
- **SPAs** are classified under the European Council Directive ‘on the conservation of wild birds’ (79/409/EEC; ‘Birds Directive’) for the protection of **wild birds and their habitats** (including particularly rare and vulnerable species listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, and migratory species).
 - **SACs** are designated under the Habitats Directive and target **particular habitats** (Annex 1) and/or species (Annex II) identified as being of European importance.
- 2.4 For ease of reference during HRA, general practice has been that these three designations are collectively referred to as either **Natura 2000** or **European sites**. This means that a Screening Assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans or projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.

3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 As the Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan is not directly connected with the management of any European sites, and includes proposals for development which may affect European sites, it is necessary under Regulation 102(1)(a) of the Habitats Regulations 2010 to undertake screening for likely significant effects on European sites.
- 3.2 The HRA of neighbourhood plans is undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy in a neighbourhood plan would adversely affect the integrity of the site in question. This is judged in terms of the implications of the plan for a site's 'qualifying features' (i.e. those Annex I habitats, Annex II species, and Annex I bird populations for which it has been designated) and are measured with reference to the conservation objectives for those qualifying features as defined by Natural England.
- 3.3 The first process is to undertake an initial screening report to determine the need to undertake the requirement for a HRA, this initial screening identifies whether the Plan could impact upon any European site that could be within the Neighbourhood Area or nearby.
- 3.4 If a European Site is within the Neighbourhood Area or the Neighbourhood Area could impact upon a European site then this will need to be taken into account and a full screening assessment will need to be undertaken.
- 3.5 The full screening stage consists of a description of the plan, identification of potential effects on European Sites, assessing the effects on European Sites (taking into account potential mitigation provided by other policies in the plan). For Neighbourhood Plans the outcome should demonstrate there are no likely effects upon the European sites. If any likely effects occur then there will need to be amendments to the NDP made and be re-screened until all likely effects have been mitigated.

4.0 Results of the Initial Screening Report and options

- 4.1 The initial Screening report (June 2013) found that the River Wye SAC is located to the south west, and the river Lugg is 0.5km away from the Group Parish Neighbourhood Area and therefore a full screening assessment is required.
- 4.2 For full details of the River Wye's attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, June 2013, can be found in Appendix 4 of this HRA report. This information made it possible to identify the features of each site which determine site integrity, as well as the specific sensitivities of each site, therefore enabling later analysis of how the potential impacts of the Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Plan may affect site integrity.
- 4.3 The initial options for the NDP were assessed to determine their environmental impact that could affect the River Wye SAC. Overall the majority of the options proposing any growth appear to depend on location and scale in relation to environmental impact. However the options listed are all except H1.2 on a small scale and are unlikely to have a significant impact on the SAC.
- 4.4 As Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior progresses from options onto their NDP policies, the Plan will need to identify ways in which the least effect on the River Wye SAC could be achieved, alongside taking forward the preferred options from the consultation from the community. If a majority of these options are taken forward either as standalone policies or in combination with other policies then the mitigation from these options will help to counter balance the effect of all new development within the Parish. A list of the options assessed can be found in Appendix 1, and the Assessment matrix for the options can be found Appendix 2.

5.0 Description of the Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Plan

5.1 The Draft Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan present detailed policies for development in the Neighbourhood Area, which is equivalent to the group parish boundary, up to 2031. The first part of the Plan introduces the Plan and its preparation and discusses the background to each of the villages.

5.2 The NDP then details the vision for the Group Parish over the Plan period and five objectives of how this will be achieved. The objectives cover the following topics:

- Accommodate future development to retain rural character
- Ensure housing needs are met within the limits and provisions for such developments.
- Retain and develop community facilities.
- Lessen harmful effects of traffic and make roads safer.
- Support and encourage development of small home-based businesses and traditional farming

5.3 The Neighbourhood Plan also sets out 17 policies on themes based on the objective headings above:

- Policy HFSP1: Promoting a sustainable and thriving community
- Policy HFSP2: Development strategy
- Policy HFSP3: Housing development and phasing
- Policy HFSP4: New homes in Stoke Prior
- Policy HFSP5: New homes in Risbury
- Policy HFSP6: New homes in Steen's Bridge
- Policy HFSP7: Provision of affordable housing outside the villages
- Policy HFSP8: Design criteria for housing and sites
- Policy HFSP9: Development of community services and facilities
- Policy HFSP10: Retention of community services and facilities
- Policy HFSP11: Highways and transport infrastructure
- Policy HFSP12: Developing and supporting local businesses
- Policy HFSP13: Broadband infrastructure
- Policy HFSP14: Surface and foul water drainage
- Policy HFSP15: Renewable energy
- Policy HFSP16: The Natural Environment
- Policy HFSP17: Protecting Local Heritage

5.4 The NDP proposes that the sites can be found for housing in the vacant sites within the settlement boundaries of Stoke Prior, Risbury and Steen's Bridge in order to facilitate the proportional growth envisaged by Policy RA1 and RA2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) this can be found on the maps below.

5.5 Humber Ford Stoke Prior Settlement Boundaries

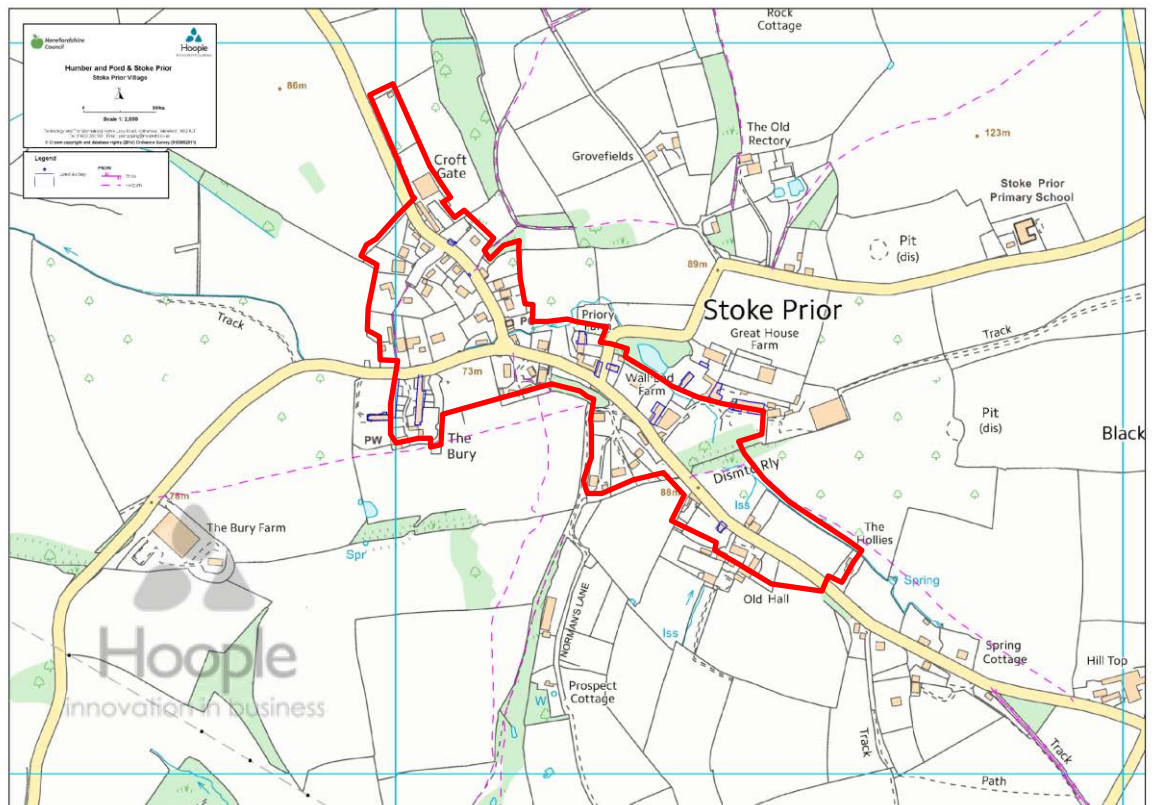


Figure 2-Stoke Prior Settlement Boundary

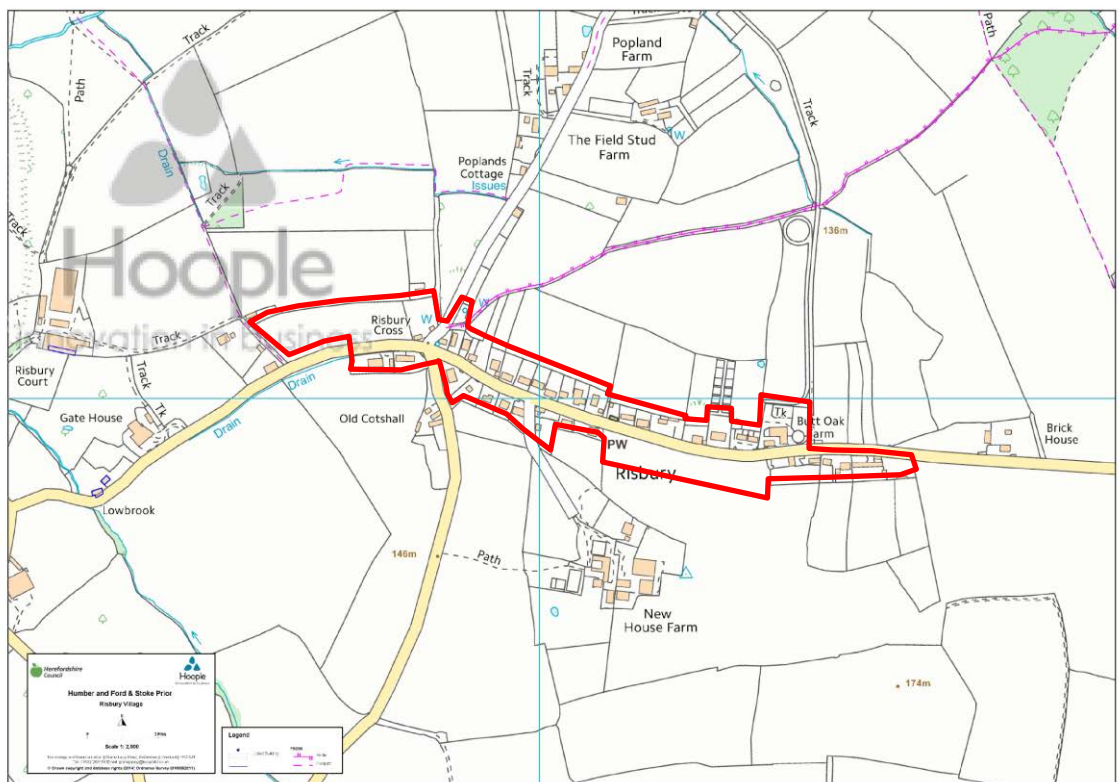


Figure 3-Risbury Settlement Boundary

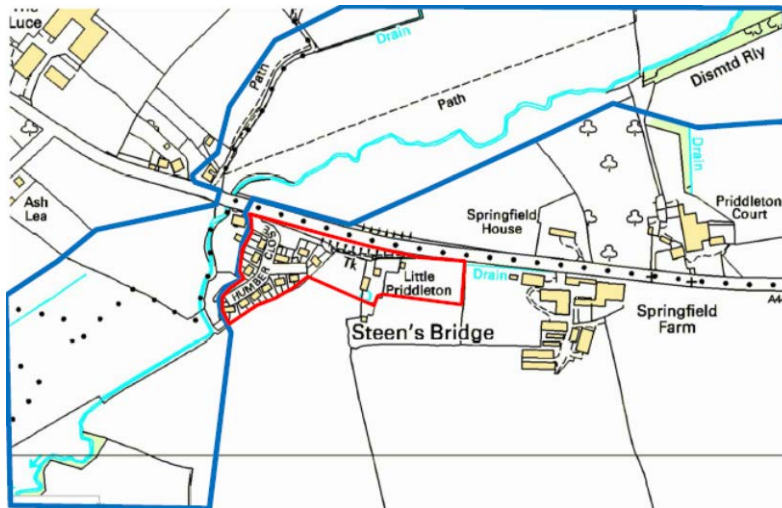


Figure 4-Steen's Bridge Settlement Boundary

6.0 Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'in-combination' effects

- 6.1 Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations 2010 requires an appropriate assessment where a land use plan (not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. In addition, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulation 2012 a NDP cannot have a significant effect on any European Site whether alone or in combination with another Plan.
- 6.2 There are a number of potentially relevant plans and projects which may result in in-combination effects with the Core Strategy across Herefordshire, these plans have been reviewed and can be found in Appendix 2 of the pre-submission publication of the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment (May 2014). It is seen that as this NDP does not go over and beyond the requirements set out in the Core Strategy this review will also be substantial for the NDP.
- 6.3 It is considered that as the Humber Ford Stoke Prior NDP does contain policies and site allocations which would result in similar levels of development than envisaged by strategic policies, as set out in the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy), this review will suffice for the purposes of the NDP. Adjacent neighbourhood plans (Hope under Dinmore, Bodenham, Bredenbury and District Hatfield and District and Leominster) are at varying stages of their production. But none of the proposals within these plans involve the measures to promote higher levels of growth than the Local Plan (Core Strategy) at this stage.
- 6.4 The latest version of the HRA for the Local Plan (Core Strategy) also identifies that both the Water Cycle Study for Herefordshire and the work on the Nutrient Management Plan, have both been considered as part of the in-combination assessment. The former, on the one hand, indicates the potential for planned water abstraction requirements combined with pressures on European Sites from the Local Plan's policies, whilst the latter seeks to ensure the favourable conservation status of the SAC in respect of phosphate levels as soon as possible and at the latest by 2027.

7.0 Assessment of the 'likely significant effects' of the Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan NDP

- 7.1 As required under Regulation 102 of the Habitats Regulations 2010, a screening assessment has been undertaken to identify the 'likely significant effects' of the NDP. A screening matrix was prepared in order to identify whether any of the policies in the Plan would be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC.
- 7.2 The findings of the screening matrix can be found in the Screening Matrix in Appendix 3 of this report. Colour coding was used to record the likely impacts of the policies on the European site and its qualifying habitats and species as shown in the table 1 below.

Red	There are likely to be significant effects
Green	Significant effects are unlikely

- 7.3 The screening matrix took the approach of screening each policy, objective and housing policy individually, which is consistent with current guidance. The results from the HRA reports for the Pre-submission version of the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the proposed Main Modifications were also taken into consideration.
- 7.4 Mitigation of some of the identified potential effects could be achieved through additional policy wording and the implementation of the other policies within the NDP and the Local Plan (Core Strategy). HFSP14, Surface and foul water drainage helps to alleviate impact of flooding through precautionary work before development is committed. Policy HFSP16 in the Humber Ford Stoke Prior NDP will safeguard any proposal or development against detrimental impact on the environment and protected sites.

8.0 Timescale for adoption

- 8.1 The Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) is in its final stages of production and the hearing was held in February 2015. It is anticipated that the Inspector's report will be received in September 2015. Given the current draft stage of the Humber Ford Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Development Plan, the assumption is made whilst producing the HRA reports and screening matrix is that the Core Strategy will be adopted prior to the adoption of the Humber Ford Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Development Plan.

9.0 Conclusions from the Screening Matrix

- 9.1 None of the Humber Ford Stoke Prior NDP objectives and policies (July 2015) were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. This conclusion is based on assumptions and information contained within the Humber Ford Stoke Prior NDP, the proposed Main Modifications to the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the latest version of the HRA for the Local Plan (Core Strategy), updated in April 2015 in light of the said modifications and published on the Council's website.
- 9.2 In many cases this is because the policy itself would not result in development, i.e., it related instead to criteria for development. Where there are housing development policies, a number of cases the policies also included measures to help support the natural environment policy HFSP16 and protecting Local Heritage therefore no significant effect conclusion could be reached. In addition, these policies have the potential to mitigate some of the possible adverse effects arising from other policies such as housing and transport infrastructure policies.
- 9.3 The plan allocates settlement boundaries within the three core settlements of Steen's Bridge, Risbury and Stoke Prior. The Neighbourhood Area has two RA1 settlements of Stoke Prior and Risbury and one RA2 settlement of Steen's Bridge. Within the settlement boundaries there is space to accommodate housing to meet the Core Strategy housing development target. In response to the River Wye SAC, the River Lugg runs adjacent to the Parish of Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior and has a number of tributaries running into the Lugg and Wye catchment.
- 9.4 The water cycle study highlights that most of the River Wye catchment is in a moderate ecological status. The WCS also identifies that the Humber brook is one of the worst rivers in terms of ecological status and currently classified as 'bad'. And will require

special mitigation measures if new housing is required. The 2014 Nutrient Management Plan highlights the River Lugg section of the SAC is currently exceeding the phosphate target and suggests that new development could have a small impact on the phosphate levels downstream in the Lugg. Humber Ford Stoke Prior NDP has addressed these issues through HFSP14 Surface Water and Foul drainage policy, which is likely to mitigate the effects of additional development. In addition, the preparation of the Nutrient Management Plan for the River Wye SAC should ensure that development within Herefordshire which can be accommodated within existing water discharge permits would not be likely to have a significant effect upon the River Wye SAC.

- 9.5 It is unlikely that the Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan will have any in-combination effects with any Plans from neighbouring parish councils as the level of growth proposed is the same as that proposed for the Housing Market Area in the Herefordshire Core Strategy and all of the proposed housing sites will be of a small scale.
- 9.6 It is therefore concluded that the **Humber, Ford and Stoke Prior Plan will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC.**
- 9.7 Any further amendments to policies (post July 2015) will be rescreened if required and an addendum to this report will be produced.

Appendix 1

Humber Ford Stoke Prior Options

<i>NDP Option H1.1: Housing Growth, 2011-31, meeting the Core Strategy targets</i>
<i>NDP Option H1.2: Housing Growth, 2011-31, exceeding the Core Strategy targets</i>
<i>NDP Proposal H2: Siting of new housing in the main villages</i>
<i>NDP Proposal H3: Predominantly smaller houses to be built, prioritising the needs of local people</i>
<i>NDP Option H4.1: Design and density of new housing determined by surroundings</i>
<i>NDP Option H4.2: Low density of new housing defined</i>
<i>NDP Option H5.1: No housing estate developments permitted</i>
<i>NDP Option H5.2: Some housing estate developments permitted</i>
<i>NDP Proposal F1: Re-location of Village Halls</i>
<i>NDP Proposal F2.1: Establishment of a pre-School/Nursery in Stoke Prior</i>
<i>NDP Proposal F2.2: School alterations and extensions</i>
<i>NDP Proposal F3: The Lamb Inn</i>
<i>NDP Proposal F4: Stoke Prior Post Office</i>
<i>NDP Proposal F5: Sports and Recreation facilities</i>
<i>NDP proposal T6.2 Street lighting</i>
<i>NDP Proposal B1: Local businesses</i>
<i>NDP Proposal E1: Drainage and flooding</i>
<i>NDP Proposal E2.1: Renewable energy generation in new developments</i>
<i>NDP Proposal E2.2: Renewable energy proposals</i>
<i>NDP Proposal E3: Protecting our natural and historic environment</i>

Appendix 2

Table 1: HRA Screening of Emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan Options

Parish Council Name: Humber Ford and Stoke Prior

NDP Title: Neighbourhood Development Plan

Date undertaken: May 2015

NDP options , objectives, policies	HRA Screening of Emerging NDP objectives, options and policies				
	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the objective/option/policy	Likely effect if option implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites? (Yes/No, with reasons) <i>(If no, progress on to next objective/option/policy. If yes, progress on to next set of columns in row)</i>	European Sites potentially affected	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of objective/option/policy and to be considered as part of Appropriate Assessment	If recommendations are implemented, would it be possible that it would result in no LSE? (Yes/No with reasons)
<i>NDP Option H1.1: Housing Growth, 2011-31, meeting the Core Strategy targets</i>	Housing will be developed in the designated neighbourhood plan area.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
<i>NDP Option H1.2: Housing Growth, 2011-31, exceeding the Core Strategy targets</i>	New houses will be developed. Increase in private car usage and traffic. Noise and disruption from construction traffic.	There may be significant effect on the SAC if growth is disproportionate.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Ensure growth is proportionate within the settlements of Humber Ford and Stoke Prior.	This will depend on scale and extent of such development; if it is disproportionate it is likely to have a detrimental effect on the SAC.
<i>NDP Proposal H2:</i>	New housing will be developed in main	Unlikely that there will be	N/A	N/A	No, this option acknowledges

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<i>Siting of new housing in the main villages</i>	settlements.	any significant effects on the European Site.			sustainable scale growth within defined settlement boundaries in line with Core Strategy policy. Safeguard policies exist within the plan.
<i>NDP Proposal H3: Predominantly smaller houses to be built, prioritising the needs of local people</i>	Small houses will be developed.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No. This criteria based policy will not produce any impact upon the European site.
<i>NDP Option H4.1: Design and density of new housing determined by surroundings</i>	New houses will be developed to fit in context with existing buildings	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No, this option would not result in development but promotes design and density criteria for housing within the NDP area.
<i>NDP Option H4.2: Low density of new housing defined</i>	New housing will be developed. Increase demand in transportation. Increase demand in water abstraction and waste production.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No, this option would not result in development but promotes low density housing criteria .
<i>NDP Option H5.1: No housing estate developments permitted</i>	New housing will be developed. Increase demand in transportation. Increase demand in water and waste.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to have significant effect on the SAC.

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<i>NDP Option H5.2: Some housing estate developments permitted</i>	New housing will be developed. Increase demand in transportation. Increase demand in water and waste.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to have significant effect on the SAC.
<i>Option Proposal F1: Re-location of Village Halls</i>	Construction traffic created Village Hall development	Uncertain of effect towards the SAC need further detail of location and scale of re location.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Criteria policies to be included within the plan which safeguard environmental assets	Uncertain at this point will depend on scale and size as well as location of proposed re location.
<i>Option Proposal F2.1: Establishment of a pre-School/Nursery in Stoke Prior</i>	Small increase in traffic Use of building materials Development of pre-school nursery	Uncertain of effect towards the SAC need further detail of location.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Criteria policies to be included within the plan which safeguard environmental assets	Uncertain at this point will depend on scale and size as well as location of proposed pre-school/ nursery.
<i>Option Proposal F2.2: School alterations and extensions</i>	School Extension development. Increase in traffic short term and long term. Use of building materials	Uncertain of effect towards the SAC need further detail of scale/ size of extension.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Criteria policies to be included within the plan which safeguard environmental assets	Uncertain at this point will depend on scale and size as well as location of proposed extension.
<i>Option Proposal F3: The Lamb Inn</i>	Retain community pub	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
<i>Option Proposal F4: Stoke Prior Post Office</i>	Retain post office	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant

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<i>Option Proposal F5: Sports and Recreation facilities</i>	Retain sports and recreation facilities Protect and development of sports and recreation facilities	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
<i>Option Proposal T3: Road safety and speeding</i>	Traffic calming measures facilitated	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	This option is likely to mitigate the environmental effects of development within the neighbourhood area.
<i>Option Proposal T4: Parking provision</i>	Parking space increase	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	This option is likely to mitigate the environmental effects of development within the neighbourhood area.
<i>Option proposal T6.1: Pedestrian footways</i>	Footways maintain. Increase in using footpaths.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	This option is likely to mitigate the environmental effects of development within the neighbourhood area.
<i>Option proposal T6.2 Street lighting</i>	Decrease of usage of lighting.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	This option is likely to mitigate the environmental effects of development within the neighbourhood area.

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<i>Option Proposal B1: Local businesses</i>	Development of local business. Increase in traffic.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of this proposal is unlikely to have a significant effect on the SAC.
<i>Option Proposal E1: Drainage and flooding</i>	Increase in drainage systems and food prevention facilities	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	This option ensures development proposals fully address flooding issues at an early stage of development.
<i>Option Proposal E2.1: Renewable energy generation in new developments</i>	Renewable energy infrastructure development	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
<i>Option Proposal E2.2: Renewable energy proposals</i>	Renewable energy infrastructure development	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
<i>Option Proposal E3: Protecting our natural and historic environment</i>	No inappropriate development will be developed	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	This option ensures historic environment protection and is likely to mitigate the environmental effects of development within the neighbourhood area.

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Appendix 3

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

Parish Council Name: Humber Ford and Stoke Prior

NDP Title: Neighbourhood Development Plan

Date undertaken: May 2015

NDP options , objectives, policies	HRA Screening of Emerging NDP objectives, options and policies				
	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the objective/option/policy	Likely effect if option implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites? (Yes/No, with reasons) <i>(If no, progress on to next objective/option/policy. If yes, progress on to next set of columns in row)</i>	European Sites potentially affected	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of objective/option/policy and to be considered as part of Appropriate Assessment	If recommendations are implemented, would it be possible that it would result in no LSE? (Yes/No with reasons)
Objective 1. Accommodate future development to retain rural character	Development will take place but the rural character of the parish will be retained	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No, development is in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should help avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects. .
Objective 2. Ensure housing needs are met within the limits and	The required number in line with the Core Strategy and types of	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No, the objective acknowledges small scale growth within

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provisions for such developments	new houses will be provided within the relevant constraints.	Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP14 and 16.			defined settlement boundaries in line with Core Strategy policy. Safeguard policies exist within the plan.
Objective 3. Retain and develop community facilities.	Existing facilities will be retained or developed in a sustainable way.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No, development is in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should help avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.
Objective 4. Lessen harmful effects of traffic and make roads safer.	Harmful effects associated with traffic will be reduced and roads made safer.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. And are likely to	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No, this objective seeks to protect the environment and mitigate traffic impact.
Objective 5. Support and encourage development of small home-based businesses and traditional farming	Home-based businesses and traditional farming activities will be supported and encouraged.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Policy HFSP1: Promoting a sustainable and thriving community.	Support for sustainable projects	If objective is realised then the policies that deliver it could have a positive impact upon European sites.	N/A	N/A	No, this objective will not lead to development; rather it acknowledges that proportional

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					growth will occur across the neighbourhood area in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy).
Policy HFSP2: Development Strategy.	Proportional growth in line with Policy RA2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy).	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP14 and 16.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Policy HFSP3: Housing development and phasing	Housing developed will be phased. Construction traffic may create noise and disruption but will be reduced from phasing development.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP 11, 14, 16 and 17.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Policy HFSP4: New Homes in Stoke Prior	New homes will be created in Stoke Prior. Construction traffic may create noise and disruption.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP 11, 14, 16 and 17.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant

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Policy HFSP5: New homes in Risbury	New homes will be created in Risbury. Construction traffic may create noise and disruption	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP 11,14 , 16 and 17.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Policy HFSP6: New homes in Steen's Bridge	New homes will be developed in Steens' Bridge. Construction traffic may create noise and disruption.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP 11,14 , 16 and 17.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Policy HFSP7: Provision of affordable housing outside the villages	Affordable housing will be developed under rural exception sites policy. Construction traffic may create noise and disruption, however this will be on a small scale.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No. This criteria based policy will not produce any impacts upon the European site.
Policy HFSP8: Design criteria for housing and sites	Houses developed within the Neighbourhood area will abide by design criteria listed in HFSP8.m,n	This is a criteria based policy and is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No. This criteria based policy will not produce any impacts upon the European site.

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Policy HFSP9: Development of community services and facilities	Community services and facilities (village hall, and Stoke Prior primary school extension) will be developed within the neighbourhood area.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. Potential detrimental effects would be mitigated with the policies within the Core Strategy and by NDP policy HFSP14 , 16 and 17.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant.
Policy HFSP10: Retention of community services and facilities	Community facilities and facilities will be retained within the neighbourhood area.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No, this policy will not directly lead to development, it seeks to protect and retain community services and facilities.
Policy HFSP11: Highways and transport infrastructure	Development of roads/ infrastructure needed.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No, this policy aims to mitigate traffic impact.
Policy HFSP12: Developing and supporting local businesses	Local businesses will be supported and developed.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Policy HFSP13: Broadband infrastructure	Development of broadband within the neighbourhood plan area.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No, this policy will not directly lead to development, it seeks to protect and avoid the change of use of specific premise.
Policy HFSP14: Surface and foul water	Improvement works to	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on	N/A	N/A	No, this policy aims to mitigate any potential

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drainage	fowl sewerage	the European Site.			harmful effect that surface and foul drainage caused from development t upon the European sites.
Policy HFSP15: Renewable energy	Renewable energy projects will be supported by the community.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant.
Policy HFSP16: The Natural Environment	Protection of natural environment	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. This can help mitigate effect of the policies HSP3,4,5,6,	N/A	N/A	No, the policies involved in delivering this objective would only have positive impacts upon the European sites if it is successfully implemented.
Policy HFSP17: Protecting Local Heritage	Local heritage will be protected from development.	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site.	N/A	N/A	No. This criteria based policy will not produce any impact upon the European site and ensures protection for heritage assets in the neighbourhood area.

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Appendix 4

**Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment and Strategic Environmental
Assessment Screening Notification**

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulation 2012 (Reg. 32)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)

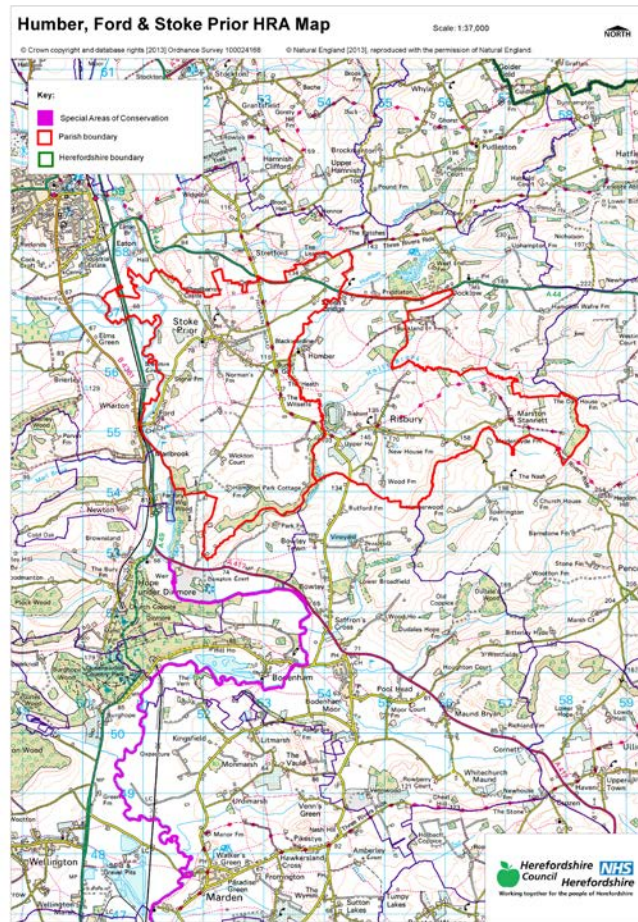
Neighbourhood Area:	Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council:	Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Group Parish Council
Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:	03/07/2013

Introduction

This Initial Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening has been undertaken to assess whether any European sites exist within or in proximity to the neighbourhood area which could be affected by any future proposals or policies.

Through continual engagement the outcomes of any required assessments will help to ensure that proposed developments will not lead to Likely Significant Effects upon a European Site or cause adverse impacts upon other environmental assets, such as the built historic or local natural environment.

**HRA Initial Screening: Map showing relationship of Neighbourhood Area with European Sites
(not to scale)**



Initial HRA Screening

River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC:

Does the Neighbourhood Area have the River Wye (including the River Lugg) in or next to its boundary?	N	The River Lugg is 0.5km away from the Group Parish
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC?	Y	The Group Parish is within the River Lugg hydrological catchment area.
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	Y	There is mains drainage at Leominster Worcester Road

Downton Gorge SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	N	Downton Gorge is 17km away from the Parishes
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River Clun SAC:

Does the Neighbourhood Area include: Border Group Parish Council or Leintwardine Group Parish Council?	N	River Clun does not border the Parishes
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Usk Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of the SAC boundary?	N	Usk Bat Sites are 49km away from the Parishes
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Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites?	N	The Group Parish is 35km away from Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites
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Wye Valley Woodlands SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley Woodlands Site?	N	The Parish is 39km away from the Wye Valley Woodlands
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HRA Conclusion:

The assessment above highlights that the following European Sites will need to be taken into account in the future Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Area and a Full HRA Screening will be required.

European Site

(List only those which are relevant from above)

River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC

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

The following environmental features are within or in general proximity to the Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Area and would need to be taken into account within a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition, the NDP will also need to consider the other SEA topics set out in Guidance Note 9a to ensure that the plan does not cause adverse impacts.

SEA features	Total	Explanation	SEA required
Air Quality Management Areas	0	There are no AQMA's within the Group Parish	N
Ancient Woodland	3	The Roughts; Hill Hole Dingle; 1 unlabelled site to west of the Group Parish	Y
Areas of Archaeological Interest	0	There are no AAI's within the Group Parish	N
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty	0	There are no AONB's within the Group Parish	N
Conservation Areas	0	There are no Conservation Areas within the Group Parish	N
European Sites	1	River Lugg SAC (border)	Y
Flood Areas		Flood Zones follow the River Lugg, Humber Brook and Holly Brook	Y
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous Listed Buildings scattered throughout the Group Parish	Y
Local Sites (SWS/SINCS/RIGS)	9 (SWS)	River Lugg; Field near Stoke Prior; Land at Stoke Prior (2); Land near Stone Farm; Land at Leasows (border); Marshland near Steen's Bridge; The Rough & The Oaks; Hill Hole Dingle (3); Wig Wood, Lewis's Plantation & Kennel Gorse	Y
Long distance footpaths/trails	1	Three Rivers Ride	Y
Mineral Reserves	6	East of Stoke Prior, Blackwardine; West of Fort to Hollywell Farm; Risbury Fort to Bowley Town; Popland Farm, north of Risbury; Gilhorn Farm, north of Risbury; Large site running from Leominster to Hereford	Y
National Nature Reserve	0	There are no NNR's within the Group Parish	N
Registered & Unregistered parks and gardens	3 Unregistered	Buckland; Hennor House; Hampton Court	Y
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	2	Roman Settlement; Risbury Camp	Y
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	2	River Lugg (Unfavourable Recovering); Hill Hole Dingle (Unfavourable Recovering)	Y

Decision Notification:

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Humber, Ford & Stoke Prior Neighbourhood Area:

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

Assessment date: 10/06/2013

Assessed by: James Latham

Appendix 1: European Sites

The table below provides the name of each European Site, which has been screened in for the purposes of neighbourhood planning in Herefordshire; includes their site features of integrity; and vulnerability data. This is based on the sites individual features of integrity and their vulnerabilities, which could include distance criteria. This has been used in identifying which parishes are likely to require a full HRA Screening of their future Neighbourhood Development Plan, to establish if their plan might have Likely Significant Effects on a European Site.

Downton Gorge
Site Features: <i>Tilio-Acerion</i> forests of slopes, screes and ravines
Vulnerability data: 10km for air quality associated with poultry units or other intensive agricultural practices.
River Clun
Site Features: Freshwater pearl mussel <i>Margaritifera margaritifera</i>
Vulnerability data: Water quality is important to maintain the site feature. Parishes either side of the River Clun will be affected.
River Wye
Site Features: Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranunculion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation. Transition mires and quaking bogs. White-clawed (or Atlantic Stream) crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> . Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> . Brook lamprey <i>Lampetra planeri</i> . River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> . Twaite shad <i>Alosa fallax</i> . Atlantic salmon <i>Salmo salar</i> . Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i> . Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> . Allis shad <i>Alosa alosa</i>
Vulnerability data: Proximity: Developments should not be within 100m of the designated bank. Some developments beyond 100m may also have impacts based on proximity and these issues should be addressed where possible when developing NDP policy and choosing site allocations. Water Quality: Within the whole catchment of the River Wye, which includes the River Lugg, mains drainage issues with regards to water quality are being resolved through the Core Strategy / Local Plan and development of a Nutrient Management Plan. Welsh Water should be consulted to ensure that the proposed growth will be within the limit of their consents. Otters: "An otter will occupy a 'home range', which on fresh waters usually includes a stretch of river as well as associated tributary streams, ditches, ponds, lakes and woodland. The size of a home range depends largely on the availability of food and shelter, and the presence of neighbouring otters. On rivers, a male's home range may be up to 40km or more of watercourse and associated areas; females have smaller ranges (roughly half the size) and favour quieter locations for breeding, such as tributary streams. Otters without an established home range are known as 'transients'. They are mostly juveniles looking for a territory of their own, or adults that have been pushed out of their territories. Transient otters may use an area for a short while, but they will move on if conditions are not suitable or if they are driven away by resident otters. Transients will have been important in extending the range of otters, but they are very difficult to identify from field signs. Within a home range an otter may use many resting sites. These include above-ground shelters, such as stands of scrub or areas of rank grass, and underground 'holts' – for example, cavities under tree roots and dry drainage pipes." (Source: EA website: http://www.environmentagency.gov.uk/static/documents/Business/Otters_the_facts.pdf accessed 09/04/2013)

Usk Bat Site

Site Features: Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection: European dry heaths, Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration, Blanket bogs, Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation, Caves not open to the public, *Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines. Annex II species of primary reason for site selection: Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, UK population 5%, although it is suggested this is an underestimate.

Vulnerability data: Lesser Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 5km and 10km between their summer and winter roosts. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is vulnerable to disturbance; light pollution; and habitat loss. Check with the planning ecologist for other issues.

Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites

Site Features: Annex II species that are a primary reason for site selection: Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*. Greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum*

Vulnerability data: Lesser Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 5km and 10km between their summer and winter roosts. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is vulnerable to disturbance; light pollution; and habitat loss. Check with the planning ecologist for other issues.

Greater Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 20-30km between their summer and winter roosts.

NDPs closest to the European Site will need to consider:

Woodland habitat buffer.

Lesser Horseshoe Bat: Old buildings; woodland locations; sheltered valleys, extensive deciduous woods or dense scrub, close to roost sites. In areas of fragmented habitats, linear habitats such as hedgerows are important corridors. Vulnerable to loss or disturbance of both summer and winter roosts and removal of linear habitat.

Greater Horseshoe Bat: Large buildings, pasture, edge of mixed deciduous woodland and hedgerows. Mixed land-use especially south-facing slopes, favours beetles, moths and insects they feed on. During the winter they depend on caves, abandoned mines and other underground sites for undisturbed hibernation. A system/series of sites required. Vulnerable to loss of insect food supply, due to insecticide use, changing farming practices and loss of broad-leaved tree-cover and loss / disturbance of underground roosts sites.

Wye Valley Woodlands

Site Features: Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for site selection: Beech forests *Asperulo-Fagetum*, *Tilio-Acerion* forests of slopes, screes and ravines, *Taxus baccata* woods of the British Isles. Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection: Lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, 51-100 residents

Vulnerability data: Lesser Horseshoe bats are known to migrate between 5km and 10km between their summer and winter roosts. The Lesser Horseshoe Bat is vulnerable to disturbance; light pollution; and habitat loss. Check with the planning ecologist for other issues. NDPs closest to the European Site will need to consider: Woodland habitat buffer. Lesser Horseshoe Bat: Old buildings; woodland locations; sheltered valleys, extensive deciduous woods or dense scrub, close to roost sites. In areas of fragmented habitats, linear habitats such as hedgerows are important corridors. Vulnerable to loss or disturbance of both summer and winter roosts and removal of linear habitat.

Appendix 2: Wye Catchment Map

