

Habitats Regulations Assessment



Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Area

November 2015

Weston Beggard HRA Regulation 14 Consultation November 2015

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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 Weston Beggard Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Weston Beggard 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 Weston Beggard Plan (November 2015, being assessed).
- 1.3 The NDP provided criteria based plan for the settlement areas of Weston Beggard and Shucknall. 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 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 Adopted Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy) published October 2015, together with the 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 Weston Beggard Area with the European Site highlighted.



Figure 1- Weston Beggard 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, Weston Beggard, 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 Weston Beggard, 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 (August 2014) found that the River Wye SAC is located to the south west, and the river Lugg is 2.5km away from the Parish Neighbourhood Area and therefore a full screening assessment is required. The river Lugg falls into the hydrological catchment area of the river Wye SAC.
- 4.2 European sites can be sensitive to changes in water quantity and quality. As outlined within the Habitat Regulation Assessment to the Herefordshire Local Plan (Core Strategy), the water supply in this area comes from Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) and no likely significant effects on European sites as a result of changes in water quality are expected in relation to the proportional growth outlined with the Herefordshire Core Strategy. In relation to water quality, the preparation of the Nutrient Management Plan for the River Wye SAC should ensure that developments within the area can be accommodated within existing water discharge permits would not be likely to have a significant effect upon the River Wye SAC.
- 4.3 For full details of the River Wye's attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Weston Beggard, Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, July 2014, 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 Weston Beggard 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. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that the options stated will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg). Overall the options proposed are on a small scale and are unlikely to have a significant impact on the SAC.
- 4.4 As Weston Beggard 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 Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Plan

5.1 The Draft Weston Beggard 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 of Weston Beggard.

5.2 The NDP then details the vision for the Group Parish over the Plan period covering key themes of Community, thriving, Cohesive, Secure and landscape and nature. The nine objectives of how this will be achieved. The Weston Beggard objectives are:

- Objective 1: To maintain the rural integrity, identity and character of community.
- Objective 2: To protect and enhance the local environment - air and water quality, green and open spaces, woodland and hedgerows, wildlife, footpaths and cycleways, and views.
- Objective 3: To meet local housing requirements
- Objective 4: To meet the needs of small and home based businesses.
- Objective 5: To support tourism through B&B provision and other local small scale initiatives
- Objective 6: Manage development of largescale farming units /polytunnels.
- Objective 7: Provide support for new community facilities eg shop, pub, café.
- Objective 8: Provide support for small scale renewable energy opportunities linked to individual developments.
- Objective 9: Improve local infrastructure including broadband, public transport, road improvements, gas supply improvements, and telecommunications

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

- Policy WB1: A Valued Environment in which to live
- Policy WB2 The Right Housing in the Right Place
- Policy WB3: Supporting a Thriving Rural Economy
- Policy WB4 Delivery of Local Infrastructure
- Policy WB5 Access to Community Facilities

5.4 The NDP proposes a criteria based plan and does not allocate a settlement boundary for any settlement within Weston Beggard. In order to facilitate the proportional growth envisaged by Policy RA1 and RA2 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) criteria for housing (10 houses) is stated in Policy WB2.

5.5 Section 8 of the Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Plan highlights the review and monitoring process proposed for the plan during the plan period until 2031. It is proposed that a formal review of the plan is undertaken in 2021.

5.6 A draft consultation is planned to be undertaken in line with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, any amendments or changes suggested as part of this assessment would need to be considered as part of the review of comments received to this consultation.

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 adopted publication of the Herefordshire Local Plan – Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment (October 2015). 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 Weston Beggard NDP does not contain site allocations. But has a criteria based plan, the policies devised have stated growth 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 (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 Weston Beggard 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). Policy WB1 in the Weston Beggard 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) was adopted in October 2015 and is now the Local Policy Framework for Herefordshire.

9.0 Conclusions from the Screening Matrix

- 9.1 None of the Weston Beggard NDP objectives and policies (November 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 Weston Beggard 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 WB1 safeguards natural environment as well as footpaths and bridleways. 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 WB2, Rural economy WB3, and infrastructure WB4 policies.
- 9.3 The Neighbourhood plan is criteria based, and plans for proportionate housing target of 10 To meet the Core Strategy housing development target, the policy stipulates that housing should be allocated in around the existing settlement in a maximum of 3 dwellings or individually. The Neighbourhood Area has two 4.15 settlements of Weston Beggard and Shucknall. In response to the River Wye SAC, the River Lugg runs 2.7km away from the Parish of Weston Beggard, and is within the hydrological catchment.

- 9.4 The water cycle study highlights that most of the River Wye (including the SAC) catchment has a moderate ecological status. The WCS identified sites in the River Frome hydrological catchment area is in a moderate ecological condition and is principally affected by water resources adverse impacts. It requires a holistic integrated approach to flood risk management. This will require integrated flood management and special mitigation measures if housing is required. The 2014 Nutrient Management Plan highlights the River Lower Frome section of the SAC is currently meeting the phosphate target and suggests that new development could lead to the water quality failing the phosphate levels and conservation objectives. The NDP has generally addressed these issues in policy WB1 and WB3. These policies as well as policies within the Core Strategy Policy SD3 and SD4 can help 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 Weston Beggard 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 proposed is criteria based and in line with the Core Strategy growth figures.
- 9.6 It is therefore concluded that the **Weston Beggard will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC.**
- 9.7 Any further amendments to policies (post November 2015) will be rescreened if required and an addendum to this report will be produced.

Appendix 1

Weston Beggard NDP Options

1. Do nothing
2. Settlement boundary or not
3. Allocation or criteria based approach
4. Residential development at one location or on small plots
5. Support Development of large scale framing units/ polytunnels or not
6. Support Commercial renewable development or not
7. Develop new business or not and what type of business

Appendix 2

Table 1: HRA Screening of Emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan Options

Parish Council Name: Weston Beggard Parish Council

NDP Title: Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Development Plan 2031 (Reg14 Consultation Draft – September 2015)

Date undertaken: October 2015

Core Strategy HRA version: Core Strategy (May 2014) and Proposed Modifications Addendum B (July 2015)

NDP options	HRA Screening of Emerging NDP options				
	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the option	Likely effect if option implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites?	European Sites potentially affected	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of option and to be considered as part of Appropriate Assessment	Could the policy have likely significant effects on European sites (taking mitigation into account?)
Option 1 Do nothing	<p>Not producing a neighbourhood plan would result in any future growth decisions within the parish being made based on the strategic policies within the Core Strategy.</p> <p>Proportional housing and employment growth in accordance with the Core Strategy.</p>	<p>Pre-submission Core Strategy HRA has examined the likely significant effects of the Core Strategy rural policies in May 2014 and concluded that there are no LSE but acknowledges the role of neighbourhood plans to provide additional certainty.</p>	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC.</p> <p>Parts of the east and north of the parish are with the hydrological catchment of the River Wye. The SAC is not within the parish itself.</p>	n/a	n/a

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<p>Option 2</p> <p>Using a settlement boundary</p>	<p>The designation of a settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open countryside. This can aid the direction of further growth to maintain the quality of the landscape and surroundings. There is less certainty as any growth will be adjudged by criteria based policy.</p>	<p>Any settlement boundary would need to be designated to ensure that sufficient capacity was included to permit the proportional growth requirements within Policy RA2 of the Core Strategy. Criteria would need to be included within the policy to safeguard against any likely effects. However the majority of the village is outside of the catchment for the River Wye</p>	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>No; policy criteria can be added to any settlement boundary criteria policy to mitigate. The majority of the village, where likely settlement boundary would be drawn is outside of the catchment area for the River Wye.</p>
<p>Option 3</p> <p>Allocation or criteria based approach</p>	<p>Allocation of sites for housing or other uses would give certainty to future development. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording. The designation of a settlement boundary will give additional certainty and help define those areas considered as the built form and open</p>	<p>Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye catchment. If required mitigation criteria can be added to site allocations policies. However the majority of the village where proportional growth and the settlement boundary are likely to be located are outside of the River</p>	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>n/a</p>	<p>No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate. The majority of the village, where likely proportionate growth and settlement boundary would be located is outside of the catchment area for the River Wye.</p>

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	countryside	Wye catchment area.			
Option 4: Residential development at one location or on small plots	Allocation of sites for housing or other uses would give certainty to future development. Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.	Pursuing this option would give greater certainty over future development within the area particularly within the River Wye (including Lugg) catchment area.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	n/a	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate. The majority of the village, where likely proportionate growth and settlement boundary would be located is outside of the catchment area for the River Wye.
Option 5: Support Development of large scale framing units/polytunnels	Large scale development of framing units may have a detrimental impact on landscape character and environment. Effects of this can be mitigated through specific landscape character policy.	Pursuing this option could have a detrimental impact on the scale due to large scale of framing polytunnels. It is uncertain the effect it may have as scale and location needs to be determined in order to make a full determination.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Reconsider size of polytunnel, specify size and location of the proposed polytunnel development. Mitigation measures can be determined through NDP policy and Core Strategy to safeguard against potential environmental threats.	Uncertain. Need to specify location and scale of 'large scale polytunnel development'. Mitigation measures can be determined through NDP policy and Core Strategy policy.
Option 6: Support Commercial renewable development	Job creation Increase in traffic/ vehicle usage Increase in water abstraction	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. However it environmental impact can be further determined on site and size and scale of proposed commercial	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	n/a	No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate. Environmental impact can be further determined on a case by case basis at planning application

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		renewable development site .			stage
Option 7: Develop new business or not and what type of business	<p>Job creation</p> <p>Increase in traffic/ vehicle usage</p> <p>Increase in water abstraction</p>	<p>Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. However it environmental impact can be further determined on site and size and scale of proposed business site.</p>	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	n/a	<p>No; policy criteria can be added to any allocation policy to mitigate. Environmental impact can be further determined on a case by case basis at planning application stage</p>

Appendix 3

Table 2: HRA Screening of Emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan Objectives and Policies

Parish Council Name: Weston Beggard Parish Council

NDP Title: Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Development Plan (Reg14 Consultation Draft – November 2015)

Date undertaken: November 2015

NDP objectives, policies	HRA Screening of Emerging NDP objectives and policies				
	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the objective/option/policy	Likely effect if objective/option/policy implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites?	European Sites potentially affected	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of objective/option/policy.	Could the policy have any likely significant effects on European sites (taking mitigation into account)?
WB Objective 1: To maintain the rural integrity, identity and character of community.	Promoting sustainable growth in keeping with the village character.	N/A	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	Criteria within the objective will help mitigate adverse impacts caused from development.	No; this objective will not lead to development; rather it acknowledges development should be in keeping with village context of Weston Beggard.
WB Objective 2: To protect and enhance the local environment - air and water quality, green and open spaces, woodland and hedgerows, wildlife, footpaths and cycleways, and views.	Further protection for local environment. Safeguard green open spaces, woodland and hedgerows. Improvements to footpaths and cycle ways.	Possible increase in recreation activities. Increase in sustainable transport usage.	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	Criteria within the objective will help mitigate adverse impacts caused from development.	No: this objective will not lead to new development rather it aims to ensure that all development proposed will conserve and protect Weston Beggard's green spaces, landscape and heritage.

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<p>WB Objective 3: To meet local housing requirements</p>	<p>Promotion of sustainable growth.</p> <p>Housing to develop on small plots in or adjacent to the settlement.</p> <p>Conversion of buildings to create housing.</p>	<p>The River Lugg does not flow through the parish and is 2.7 km away from the Parish. The Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Frome and is not within the River Wye SAC. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that there will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>Measure set out within the Core Strategy policies should help to avoid adverse impacts upon the European site.</p>	<p>No; this objective will not lead to new development rather it aims to promote small and sustainable growth within Weston Beggard.</p>
<p>WB Objective 4: To meet the needs of small and home based businesses.</p>	<p>Community support development to take place on previously developed sites.</p>	<p>The River Lugg does not flow through the parish and is 2.7 km away from the Parish. The Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Frome and is not within the River Wye SAC. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that there will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>No: this policy reiterates the criteria within the Core Strategy policies RA3, RA4 and RA5. Any resulting development will be very small scale. Additional Core Strategy and Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Plan policies will avoid any likely significant effects.</p>
<p>WB Objective 5: To support tourism through B&B provision and other local small scale</p>	<p>Small scale local business developed.</p> <p>Additional visitor numbers, increase traffic, increased abstraction and demand for water</p>	<p>No. Additional visitor numbers, increase traffic, increased abstraction and demand for water use. Potential increase in visitor numbers to the parish could have an</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>The implementation of the Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 should help to avoid adverse impacts in relation to hydrological regimes at the River</p>	<p>No; this objective in itself will not lead to development but support further employment and tourism opportunities.</p>

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initiatives	use.	effect on the River Wye. However due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that there will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).		Wye. Water quality in the River Wye SAC is also specifically addressed through the Nutrient Management Plan produced by Natural England and the Environment Agency.	
WB Objective 6: Manage development of largescale farming units/ polytunnels.	Ensure development of large scale poly tunnel as sustainable and environmentally friendly.	No. The River Lugg does not flow through the parish and is 2.7 km away from the Parish. The Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Frome and is not within the River Wye SAC.	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No: this objective in itself would not result in new development rather it relates to the safeguarding the natural environment against large scale poly tunnel development.
WB Objective 7: Provide support for new community facilities eg shop, pub, café.	Promote of community shop facilities. Promotion of small scale community enterprises. Additional visitor numbers, increase traffic, increased abstraction and demand for water use.	No. Additional visitor numbers, increase traffic, increased abstraction and demand for water use. Potential increase in visitor numbers to the parish could have an effect on the River Wye. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that it will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	The implementation of the Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 should help to avoid adverse impacts in relation to hydrological regimes at the River Wye. Water quality in the River Wye SAC is also specifically addressed through the Nutrient Management Plan produced by Natural England and the Environment Agency.	No; this policy would not lead to development itself but provides a criteria to provide support for community facilities.
WB Objective 8: Provide support for small scale renewable	Promotion of small scale renewable development	No. The River Lugg does not flow through the parish and is 2.7 km away	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	N/A	No: this objective in itself would not result in new development

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<p>energy opportunities linked to individual developments.</p>	<p>Increase in individual renewable energy developments</p>	<p>from the Parish. The Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Frome and is not within the River Wye SAC.</p>			<p>rather it relates to the safeguarding and enhancement of existing community facilities and services.</p>
<p>WB Objective 9: Improve local infrastructure including broadband, public transport, road improvements, gas supply improvements, and telecommunications.</p>	<p>Local infrastructure projects supported.</p> <p>Large scale (commercial) renewable energy projects deterred</p> <p>Community support for broadband and telecommunication projects.</p> <p>Promotion to support improvements to local services such as gas supply.</p>	<p>The River Lugg does not flow through the parish and is 2.7 km away from the Parish. The Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Frome and is not within the River Wye SAC. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that it will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>The implementation of the Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 should help to avoid adverse impacts in relation to hydrological regimes at the River Wye. Water quality in the River Wye SAC is also specifically addressed through the Nutrient Management Plan produced by Natural England and the Environment Agency.</p>	<p>No; this objective would only lead to small scale village infrastructure improvements, commercial or community facilities and potential within areas outside of the hydrological catchment of the River Wye. Additional policy safeguards exist within the Core Strategy and the Weston Beggard Neighbourhood plan to mitigate any potential likely significant effects.</p>
<p>Policy WB1: A Valued Environment in which to live</p>	<p>Encouragement of sustainable development which preserves and protects green spaces and landscape and heritage.</p> <p>Further protection for local environment.</p> <p>Safeguard green open</p>	<p>Possible increase in recreation activities.</p> <p>Increase in sustainable transport usage.</p> <p>Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that it will</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>This policy will help mitigate environmental effects of development and will protect and enhance local spaces, habitats, biodiversity, I orchards and footpaths/ bridal ways.</p>	<p>No; the policy emphasises the importance of natural environment. Although visitor and tourism activity may increase within the parish sufficient policy safeguards are in place to ensure the</p>

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	spaces, woodland and hedgerows. Improvements to footpaths and cycle ways.	have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).			sensitivity of the River Wye is mitigated from likely significant harm.
Policy WB2 The Right Housing in the Right Place	Community support for small scale housing development. Small increase in traffic and increase of private vehicle usage. Increased abstraction and demand for water use.	Additional visitor numbers, increase traffic, increased abstraction and demand for water use. Potential increase in visitor numbers to the parish could have an effect on the River Wye. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that there will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	The implementation of the Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 should help to avoid adverse impacts in relation to hydrological regimes at the River Wye. Water quality in the River Wye SAC is also specifically addressed through the Nutrient Management Plan produced by Natural England and the Environment Agency. The implementation of the Nutrient Management Plan will specifically address issues relating to water quality in the River Wye.	No: this policy would allow for small housing schemes and supports the Core Strategy Policy RA1/RA2 as well as small affordable housing schemes in line with Core Strategy H2. Due to the size and scale of development proposed it is unlikely to have a significant impact on the river Wye SAC. There are provisions within the Weston Beggard NDP and Core Strategy to avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects of new development.
Policy WB3: Supporting a Thriving Rural Economy	Community support for employment opportunities and the promotion of local business within the parish.	Potential increase in visitor numbers to the parish could have an effect on the River Wye Employment and infrastructure development. However	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC	There are safeguards within this policy to protect local character and environment along with policy WN1, to mitigate potential detrimental impacts.	No; This policy intends to support small scale employment enterprises and tourism opportunities. Any potential detrimental impact

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	<p>Community support for tourism development.</p> <p>Community support for farm diversification.</p> <p>Community support for home working.</p>	<p>due to the proximity to the River Wye and Lugg, it is unlikely that it will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).</p> <p>Possible vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment. Possible increase in recreation activities, vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p>		<p>The implementation of Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 should also help to avoid any adverse impacts in relation to the hydrological regimes at the River Wye.</p> <p>The Core Strategy policy LD2 will aim to help avoid any adverse impacts on the River Wye for new employment or businesses uses.</p> <p>Measures within Core Strategy policy SD1 should help to mitigate potential impacts relating to non-physical disturbances.</p> <p>Improved water efficiency measures, metering and addressing leakages in supply may help to mitigate any additional pressure placed on the water supply as a result of new developments.</p>	<p>caused by small scale development can be mitigated with Core Strategy Policies and policy WBNDP 1.</p>
Policy WB4 Delivery of Local Infrastructure	<p>Good quality employment and infrastructure development.</p>	<p>The River Lugg does not flow through the parish and is 2.7 km away from the Parish. The Parish is within the hydrological</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>The implementation of Core Strategy policies SD3 and SD4 should also help to avoid any adverse impacts in</p>	<p>No: it is unlikely that this policy will have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. There are safeguards</p>

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	<p>High speed broadband installed.</p> <p>Increase in communications development.</p> <p>Small increase in traffic and increase.</p> <p>More residents working from home.</p> <p>Increased abstraction and demand for water use.</p> <p>Increase in small scale renewable energy schemes.</p>	<p>catchment of the River Frome and is not within the River Wye SAC. Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that there will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).</p> <p>Possible vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.</p>		<p>relation to the hydrological regimes at the River Wye.</p> <p>The Core Strategy policy LD2 will aim to help avoid any adverse impacts on the River Wye for new employment or businesses uses.</p>	<p>within the Core Strategy and WB NDP policy 1 which can help alleviate detrimental effects caused by local infrastructure development</p>
Policy WB5 Access to Community Facilities	<p>Community support for local community facilities within Weston Beggard.</p>	<p>Due to the proximity to the River Way and Lugg, it is unlikely that it will have a significant detrimental effect on the River Wye SAC (Including Lugg).</p>	<p>River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC</p>	<p>NDP Policy WB1 and policies within the Core Strategy can help to mitigate and alleviate any detrimental impact caused from development.</p>	<p>No: due to the nature and scale of village community facilities it is unlikely that this policy will have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. There are safeguards within the Core Strategy and WB NDP policy 1 which can help alleviate detrimental effects caused by new development.</p>

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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:	Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council:	Weston Beggard Parish Council
Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:	29/08/2014

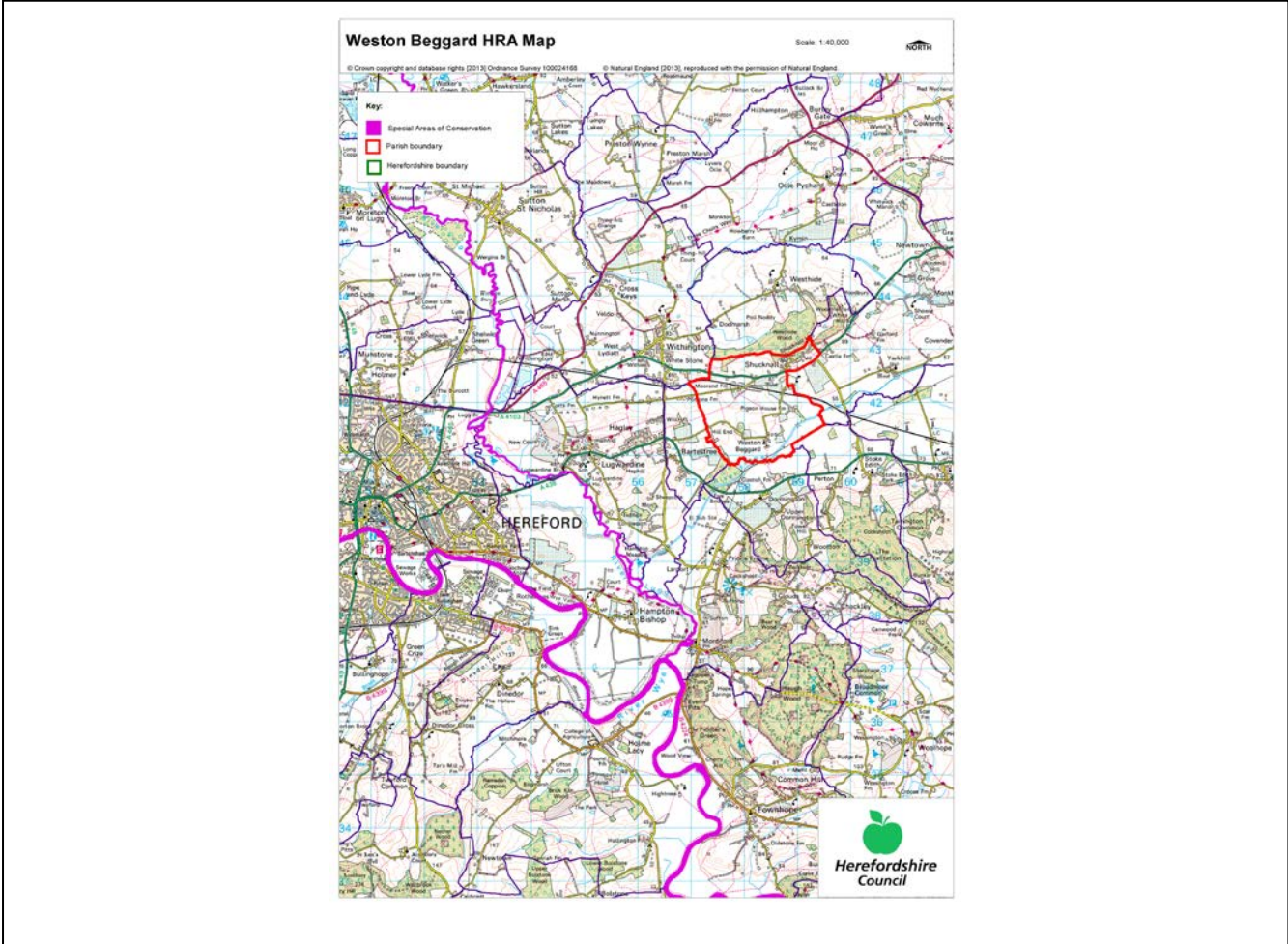
Introduction

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.

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**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 2.7km away from the Parish.
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC?	Y	The Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Frome (to the River Lugg).
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	Y	There is mains drainage at Weston Beggard.

Downton Gorge SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	N	Downton Gorge is 33.5km away from the Parish.
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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 Parish.
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Usk Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of the SAC boundary?	N	Usk Bat Sites are 45.1km away from the Parish.
------------------------------------------------------------	---	------------------------------------------------

Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of any of the individual sites that make up the Wye Valley & Forest of Dean Bat Sites?	N	Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites are 22km away from the Parish.
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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	Wye Valley Woodlands are 25km away from the Parish.
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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 Weston Beggard 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 Weston Beggard 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 (AQMA)	0	There are no AQMAs within the Parish	N
Ancient Woodland	5	Westhide Wood; Tidnor Wood (border); Ash Coppice (border); Priors Court Wood (border); Dormington Wood (border)	Y
Areas of Archaeological Interest (AAI)	0	There are no AAIs within the Parish	N
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	0	There are no AONBs within the Parish	N
Conservation Areas	0	There are no Conservation Areas within the Parish	N
European Sites (SAC)	0	There are no SACs within the Parish	N
Flood Areas/Zones		There are Flood Zones running along River Frome in the south of the Parish	Y
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous listed buildings within the Parish	Y
Local Sites (SWS/SINCS/RIGS)	2 (RIGS) 9 (SWS)	RIGS: Bartestree Quarry (Lowes Hill) (border); Dormington Slip (border) SWS: River Frome; Woodland on Shucknall; Perton roadside section ad quarry (border); Backbury Hill (border); Checkley Common (border); Woodland along Seager Hill (border); Old Canal at Monkhide (border); Ash Coppice (border); Fields near Checkley Chapel (border)	Y
Long distance footpaths/trails	0	There are no long distance footpaths/trails within the Parish	N
Mineral Reserves Sites	7	River Lodon, Monkhide to Yarkhill to Bartestree; Shucknall Hill Common; Yarkhill Reservoir to Hillend Grove (border); Quarry south east of Westhide (border); North of Lugwardine and Bartestree (border); Perton Quarry to Sheepcote Hill to Woolhope Cockshoot (border); South of Prospect Farm to Broad Grove (border)	Y
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	0	There are no NNRs within the Parish	N
Registered & Unregistered Parks and Gardens	1 Registered 5 Unregistered	Registered: Stoke Edith (border) Unregistered: Bartestree Court (border); Hagley Park/Court (border); Longworth (border); Porch House	Y

		(border); Westhide Court (border)	
Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)	2	Churchyard cross in St John the Baptist churchyard; Moated Site in Yarkhill Parish (border)	Y
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1	Perton roadside section and quarry (Favourable) (border)	Y

Decision Notification:

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Weston Beggard Neighbourhood Area:

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

Assessment date: 15/07/2014

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

