

Habitats Regulations Assessment



Brimfield & Little Hereford Neighbourhood Area

November 2014

Brimfield and Little Hereford HRA

HRA Screening Assessment

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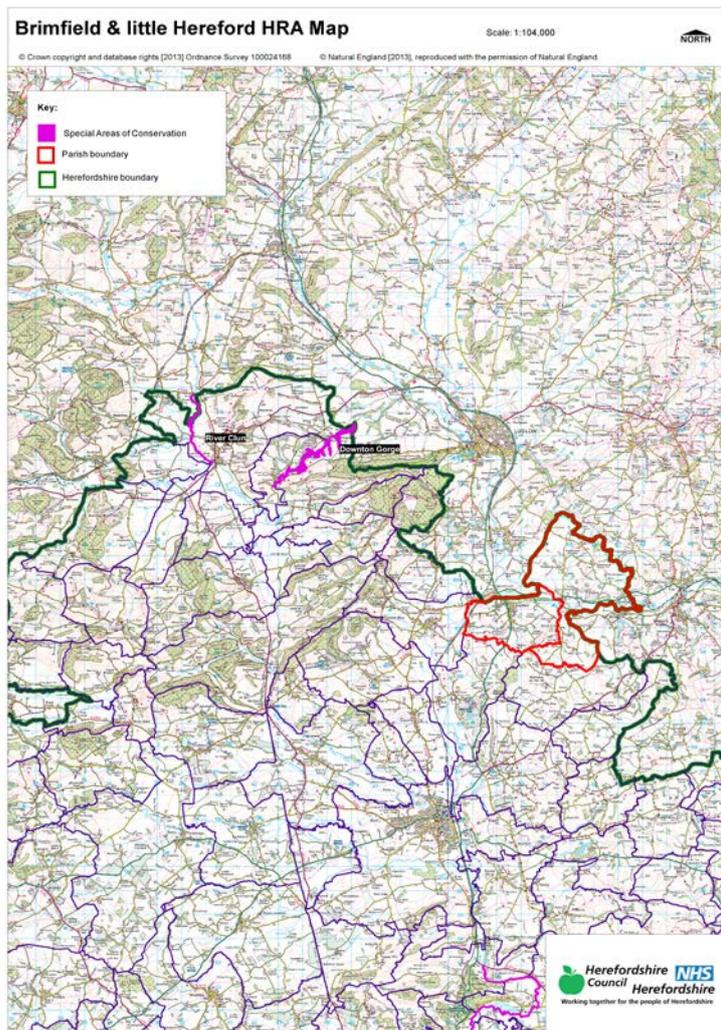
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1 Introduction

- 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 Brimfield and Little Hereford Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Brimfield and Little Hereford, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the Parish up to 2031. This HRA reviews the Draft Brimfield and Little Hereford Plan November 2014.
- 1.3 The NDP allocates small scale sites and 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. 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 (2014) and ensures that there will not be any significant impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.4 The map below shows Brimfield and Little Hereford Neighbourhood Area with the European Site highlighted.



2 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, Brimfield and Little Hereford Parish Councils are 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 Methodology

- 3.1 As the Brimfield and Little Hereford 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 Results of the Initial Screening Report and options

- 4.1 The initial Screening report (July 2013) found that the Downton Gorge SAC is located 9km north of the Neighbourhood Area and therefore a full screening assessment is required.
- 4.2 For full details of the Downton Gorge attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Brimfield and Little Hereford Neighbourhood Plan Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, July 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 Brimfield and Little Hereford 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 Downton Gorge SAC. Overall the majority of the options proposing development or growth appear to depend on location and scale in relation to environmental impact. The policies and site options offer mitigation methods for the new potential development or will not have any impact upon the Downton Gorge SAC.
- 4.4 As Brimfield and Little Hereford progresses from options onto their NDP policies, the Plan will need to identify ways in which the least effect on the Downton Gorge SAC could be achieved, alongside taking forward the preferred options from the consultation in July 2014 from the community. Option1 and Option3 have a potential to have quite a large number of houses within a development (up to 55). If these options are taken forward either as standalone policies or in combination with other options, mitigation from these options will be needed to help to counter balance the effect of all new development within the Parish. Other options could be provided to help support ways to reduce overall traffic generation, promote existing sustainable small scale development and attempt to reduce flood risk. 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 Description of the Brimfield and Little Hereford Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.1 The Draft Brimfield and Little Hereford Plan presents 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 looks at the national and local planning policy context. The next section explores key issues within each village which is a fundamental basis to develop policies from. After it then 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 objectives of how this will be achieved. The objectives cover the following topics:
- 5.3 The NDP also sets out 18 general policies on various topics based on the objective headings above and also for each of the villages, these include:

Protection of the Environment
Housing-Generally and Affordable
Protection of community facilities

**Transport
Design
Flooding**

5.4 Section 7 of the Plan describes the next stages of their neighbourhood plan process and focuses on the role of public consultation within their plan making process and the summarises the result public consultation has produced. It details the expected timeframe of the next steps of the neighbourhood planning process.

6 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 The HRA for the Core Strategy also identifies that both the Water Cycle Study for Herefordshire, which indicates the potential for planned water abstraction requirements combined with pressures on European Sites from the Core Strategy policies, and the work on the Nutrient Management Plan, to ensure the favourable conservation status of the SAC in respect of phosphate levels as soon as possible and at the latest by 2027, have both been considered as part of the in-combination assessment.

7 Assessment of the ‘likely significant effects’ of the Brimfield and Little Hereford 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 Downton Gorge 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 individually, which is consistent with current guidance documents. The results from the HRA report for the pre-submission version of the Herefordshire Core Strategy was also taking into consideration.

7.4 Mitigation of some of the identified potential effects could be achieved through implementation of the other policies within the NDP which require good practice measures during and after construction phases, such as more efficient use of water, reduction in waste and encouragement of recycling. The provision and

encouragement of use of more sustainable transport measures will also help to reduce car traffic around the parish and surrounding areas.

8 Conclusions from the Screening Matrix

- 8.1 None of the Draft Brimfield and Little Hereford Plan (November 2014) policies were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the Downton Gorge SAC. Based on assumptions and information contained within the Brimfield and Little Hereford Plan, Herefordshire Core Strategy and the Pre-submission version of the HRA for the Core Strategy all of the NDP policies were found to be unlikely to result in significant effects on the Downton Gorge SAC.
- 8.2 In many cases this is because the policy itself would not result in development, i.e., it related instead to criteria for development. In a number of cases the policies also included measures to help support the natural environment, including biodiversity and 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.
- 8.3 For those policies that were referring to sites and site allocations that would result in development and could potentially have some impact upon the Downton Gorge SAC, it was determined that due to the location of these sites, i.e. not directly near Downton Gorge, and due to the scale of the site being small (no larger than 1) and at the scale of growth that is required by the Herefordshire Core Strategy and no more, that these sites would not have an appreciable effect on the Downton Gorge SAC, i.e that they were not likely to be significant.
- 8.4 It is unlikely that the Brimfield and Little Hereford Plan will have any in-combination effects with any Plans from neighbouring parish council due to the level of growth proposed is of the same that is proposed for the Leominster Housing Market Area in the Herefordshire Core Strategy and all of the proposed housing sites will be of a small scale.
- 8.5 It is therefore concluded that the Brimfield and Little Hereford Plan will not have a likely significant effect on the Downton Gorge SAC.
- 8.6 Any further amendments to policies (post November 2014) will be rescreened if required and an addendum to this report will be produced.

Appendix 1

Brimfield and Little Hereford NDP Options

Brimfield and Little Hereford NDP Options
Option 1- Site 7 Paddocks Orchard, Tenbury Road. Development of 15 properties by land owner up to 40 houses.
Option 2- Sites 8,9,10,11 Suggested development of 14 properties-16 in total.
Option 3- Sites 4 and 5 .No indication of numbers of properties given by either landowner-potential 55 houses.

Appendix 2

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

Parish Council Name: Brimfield and Little Hereford

NDP Title: Brimfield and Little Hereford Neighbourhood Development Plan

Date undertaken: October 2014

NDP objectives, options 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)	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)
Option 1- Site 7 Paddocks Orchard, Tenbury Road. Development of 15 properties by land owner up to 40 houses.	Development may increase traffic and natural resources and facilities may be overstretched in one area. Increase in parking and congestion. Increase in water abstraction and treatment.	Yes development has the potential to contribute to have detrimental environmental effects near European sites. However due to the sites location it is unlikely to cause a significant impact.	Downtown Gorge SAC	Housing could be restricted to certain areas away from the SAC. Restricting number will help control environmental effects. As well as ensuring use of renewable energy and recycling schemes.	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant.
Option 2- Sites 8,9,10,11 Suggested development of 14 properties-16 in total.	Development may create small impact on traffic, amenities. Increase in parking. Increase in water abstraction.	No-Small scale impact. However development may have an impact on the Downtown Gorge SAC if it is in close proximity of the boundary of the SAC area.	Downtown Gorge SAC	Ensure future policy balances out the scale of promoted schemes and avoid locations to close to the Downtown Gorge SAC or its tributaries.	It is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on Downtown Gorge SAC due to the location and scale of the sites.
Option 3- Sites 4 and 5 .No indication of numbers of properties given by either landowner-potential 55 houses.	Development may increase traffic and natural resources and facilities may be overstretched. Increase in parking and congestion. Increase in water abstraction and treatment.	No-Small scale impact. However development may have an impact on the Downtown Gorge SAC if it is in close proximity of the boundary of the SAC area.	Downtown Gorge SAC	N/A	It is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on Downtown Gorge SAC due to the location and scale of the sites.

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Appendix 3

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

Parish Council Name: Brimfield and Little Hereford

NDP Title: Brimfield and Little Hereford Neighbourhood development Plan

Date undertaken: November 2014

NDP objectives, options 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- To identify a site (or sites) for small scale housing developments, providing for 35 new homes overall. These homes will be in keeping in both scale and demands of two rural parishes up to 2031, while ensuring that new housing is	Low housing numbers to meet requirements for Core Strategy within the settlement boundary.	Physical disturbance Non physical such as noise and light pollution Interruption to hydrological regimes Air pollution Increased traffic levels	Downton Gorge SAC	Good practice construction techniques. Utilise mitigation methods that other options are proposing and include within the policy, particularly sustainable design and energy efficient buildings Improved water efficiency methods	The scale and location of these new facilities will be key. This policy is not over and above the Core Strategy requirements so would have the least impact and damaging long term effect

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appropriate in terms of suitability, quantity, phasing, siting and design and having due regards to flooding and water management.					
Objective 2- To identify an up to date and appropriate settlement boundary around Brimfield village to ensure that any proposed new development is properly integrated into the existing village envelope and has good access to local services and facilities.	Development within the settlement boundary Pressure on existing facilities	Physical disturbance Non physical such as noise and light pollution Interruption to hydrological regimes Air pollution Increased traffic levels Increase in water usage	Downton Gorge SAC	Good practice construction techniques. Utilise mitigation methods that other options are proposing and include within the policy, particularly sustainable design and energy efficient buildings Improved water efficiency methods	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant
Objective 3- To ensure that transport and communication links such as public transport, pavements, cycle ways, bridle ways and footpaths are incorporated as part of the plan for both villages.	Sustainable transport development Better connectivity and accessibility will depend on layout and design of transport proposals.	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development

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<p>Objective 4-To support local businesses that contribute to the quality of life for residents including support for suitable diversification of new technology.</p>	<p>Develop new technologies</p> <p>Potential local economic growth</p> <p>Job creation</p>	<p>Potential increase in transport however this is likely to be a small scale.</p>	<p>Downton Gorge</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant.</p>
<p>Objective 5-To protect areas of open space, historic value, and environmental significance throughout both villages.</p>	<p>Protect areas of open space in respect to villages' natural and built character. This will enhance biodiversity and conserve heritage assets.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>This would act as mitigation towards all new development</p>
<p>Objective 6-To work together to protect local community facilities and support the local community to identify assets for possible Community Right to Buy initiatives.</p>	<p>Protect local community facilities within the group villages</p> <p>Promote community right to buy schemes</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>This would act as mitigation towards all new development</p>
<p>Policy BLH1-New housing within the Settlement Boundary</p>	<p>Low housing numbers to meet requirements for Core Strategy within the settlement boundary.</p>	<p>Physical disturbance</p> <p>Non physical such as noise and light pollution</p> <p>Interruption to hydrological regimes</p>	<p>Downton Gorge SAC</p>	<p>Good practice construction techniques.</p> <p>Utilise mitigation methods that other options are proposing and include within the policy, particularly</p>	<p>The scale and location of these new facilities will be key.</p> <p>This policy is not over and above the Core Strategy requirements so would have the</p>

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		Air pollution Increased traffic levels		sustainable design and energy efficient buildings Improved water efficiency methods	least impact and damaging long term effect
Policy BLH2 -New housing development	Low housing numbers to meet requirements for Core Strategy	Physical disturbance Non physical such as noise and light pollution Interruption to hydrological regimes Air pollution Increased traffic levels	Downton Gorge SAC	Good practice construction techniques. Utilise mitigation methods that other options are proposing and include within the policy, particularly sustainable design and energy efficient buildings Improved water efficiency methods	The scale and location of these new facilities will be key. This policy is not over and above the Core Strategy requirements so would have the least impact and damaging long term effect
Policy BLH3 -Local needs housing and ensuring an appropriate range of tenures, types and sizes of houses	Small scale development may create small impact on traffic, amenities. Increase in parking	No-Small scale impact. However if site are located towards Downton Gorge, this may have an impact.	Downton Gorge SAC	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development as it will be design criteria to reduce the overall impact
Policy BLH4 -Criteria for sites for sites for local needs housing in Little Hereford	Ensure new development is fitting with villages character ensuring development will not have any adverse impact to its setting	Small impact on traffic, amenities. Increase in parking. Increase in water abstraction	N/A	N/A	N/A

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Policy BLH5- Protection Of Community Facilities	Promote and protect improvement of existing facilities and amenities	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development
Policy BLH6- Local Heritage List	Protect heritage assets and local character Sensitive design used when renovating altering historic buildings	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development
Policy BLH7- Building design principles.	Provide design briefs to protect character and density of each village. Ensure proposal minimise impact on general amenity and take into consideration to noise, odour and light.	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development as it will be design criteria to reduce the overall impact
Policy BLH8- Landscape design principles.	Retain features of biodiversity, nature conservation or landscape value ensuring new development will not obscure protected views	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development
Policy BLH9- Local green space designations	Promote and protect green space	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development

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Policy BLH10- Allotments and open space	Promote allotment sites Protect open space and enhance local biodiversity and habitats	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
Policy BLH11-Water Management	Use of sustainable urban drainage systems within Brimfield and Little Hereford Protection against surface water flooding	No	N/A	N/A	Will be a suitable mitigation technique to offset any impact from other developments
Policy BLH12- Criteria for assessing the suitability of future potential development sites	Minimise impact on water quality.	No	N/A	N/A	Will be a suitable mitigation technique to offset any impact from other developments
Policy BLH13- Development in areas of flood risk	Minimise flood risk in Brimfield and Little Hereford Ensure no development is sited in Flood Zone 1	No	N/A	N/A	Will be a suitable mitigation technique to offset any impact from other developments
Policy BLH14- Design for flood resilience and	Design mitigation methods for development in flood sensitive areas	No	N/A	N/A	This would act as mitigation towards all new development as it will be design criteria to reduce the overall

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resistance					impact
Policy BLH15- Design to reduce surface water run off	Flood alleviation measures Some development disturbance	No	N/A	N/A	Scale and extent of such development is unlikely to be significant.
Policy BLH16- New communication technologies	Strengthen broadband infrastructure Reduction in car usage Small reduction in air pollution	No likely significant effect on the Downton Gorge SAC	Downton Gorge SAC	N/A	No. This objective is not likely to lead to development but ensure communications infrastructure is strengthened for community use. Faster broadband speeds may provide work from home opportunities, thereby reducing the need to travel.
Policy BLH17- Developments supporting rural enterprise	Support for employment opportunities within the parish. Encouragement of small local business start-ups, working from home and farm diversification primarily in conversion, extensions.	Possible vehicular movements and demand for water abstraction and treatment.	Downton Gorge SAC	Improved water efficiency measures, metering and addressing leakages in the supply may help to mitigate any additional pressures on the water supply as a result of new development.	No; this objective in itself does not lead to development but supports further employment opportunities within the parish.

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Policy BLH18- Supporting public transport, walking and cycling	Promote interdependency by cycle ways and reducing car use Promote sustainable transport methods	No	N/A	N/A	N/A
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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)

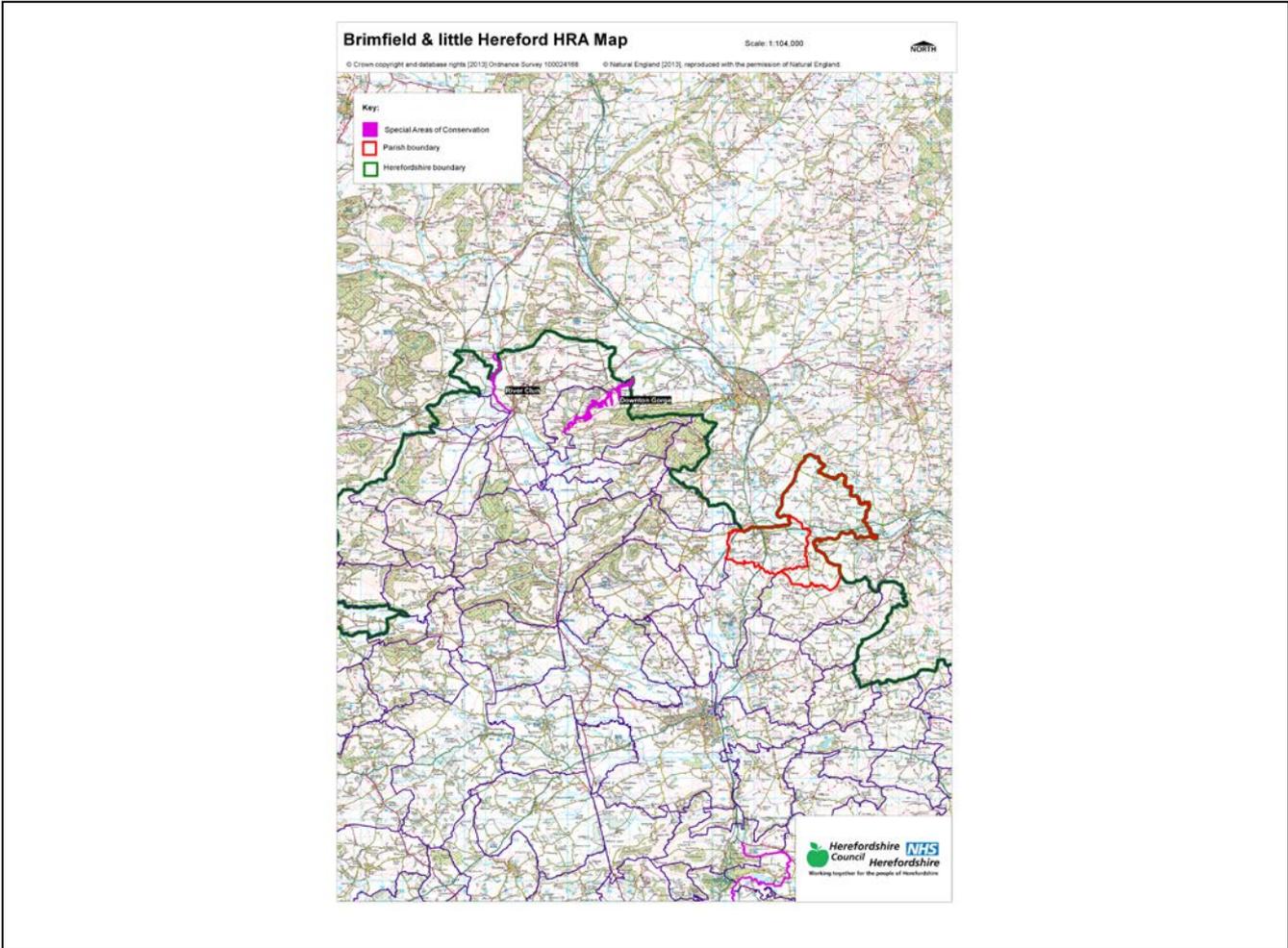
Neighbourhood Area:	Brimfield & Little Hereford Group Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council:	Brimfield & Little Hereford Group Parish Council
Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:	03/07/2013

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 13km away from the Group Parish
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC?	N	The Group Parish is not within the River Wye hydrological catchment area.
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	N/A	

Downton Gorge SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	Y	Downton Gorge is 9km 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 59km 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 46km 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 51km 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 Brimfield & Little Hereford Neighbourhood Area and a Full HRA Screening will be required.

European Site

(List only those which are relevant from above)

Downton Gorge 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 Brimfield & Little Hereford 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	7	Ingham Coppice (border); Bleathwood Coppice; Deadnal Coppice; Gravel Croft Coppice (border); Upton Court Wood; Park Wood (border); Bathurst Coppice (border)	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	0	There are no SAC's within the Group Parish	N
Flood Areas		There are Flood Zones following the River Teme, and also along the Ledwyche Brook. There is also a Flood Zone through Brimfield and out to the west of the Parish	Y
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous Listed Buildings throughout the Group Parish	Y
Local Sites (SWS/SINCs/RIGS)	11 (SWS)	Woodlands adjoining Ledwych; Land at Temple Farm; Land at Temple Meadow; River Teme; Land at The Grove; Woodland near Upton Hill; Land adjacent to Upton Brook; Land at Blakes Bridge; Pulpits Fingers; Brimfield Common; The Brooches and adjoining Woodlands (border)	
Long distance footpaths/trails	0	There are no Trails within the Group Parish	N
Mineral Reserves	0	There are no Minerals Reserves Sites within the Group Parish	N
National Nature Reserve	0	There are no NNR's within the Group Parish	N
Registered & Unregistered parks and gardens	1 Unregistered	Easton Court	Y
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	0	There are no SAM's within the Group Parish	N
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	1	River Teme (Unfavourable No Change)	Y

Decision Notification:

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Brimfield & Little Hereford Neighbourhood Area:

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

Assessment date: 07/06/2013

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

