

Habitats Regulations Assessment



**Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group
Neighbourhood Area**

January 2017



**Herefordshire
Council**

Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group HRA

HRA Screening Assessment

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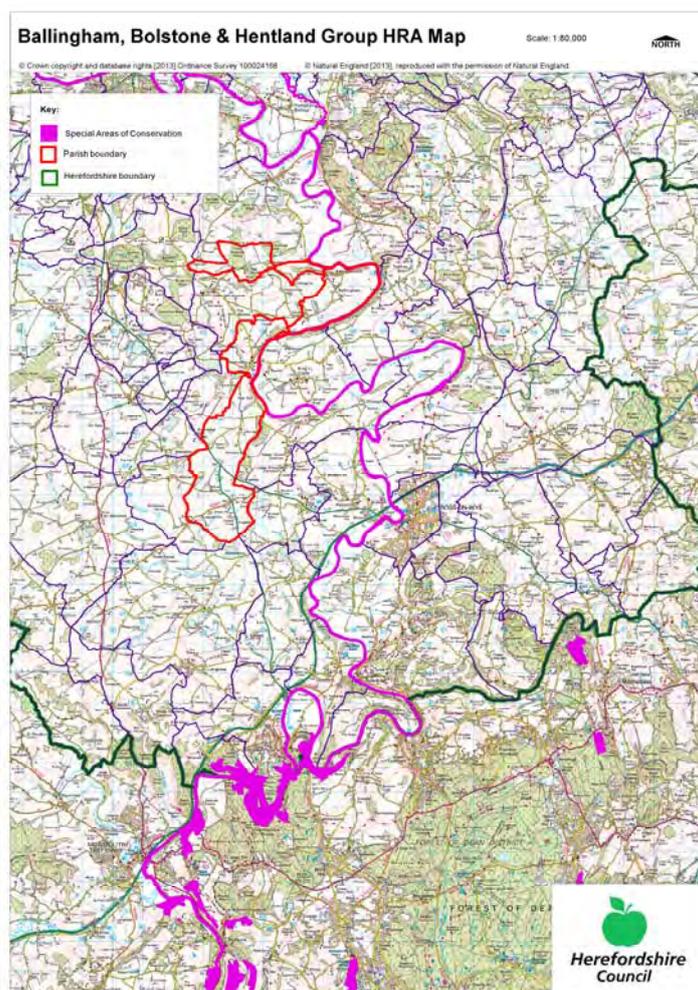
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1 Introduction

- 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 Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group Parish Council is producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan for Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group Parish, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the Parish up to 2031. This HRA reviews the Draft Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Plan January 2017.
- 1.3 The NDP is criteria based plan and has no site allocations, but allocates a settlement boundary for Hoarwithy and St Owens Cross. 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. This high level screening assessment should be read in combination with the Herefordshire Pre-submission publication of the Local Plan-Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment Report (April 2014) and ensures that there will not be any significant impacts upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.4 The map below shows Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group 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, Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group 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 Methodology

- 3.1 As the Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group NDP 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 Results of the Initial Screening Report and options

- 4.1 The initial Screening report (February 2014) found that the River Wye SAC runs along the eastern borders of all 3 parishes, the Wye Valley Woodlands are 7.5 km away from the group parish therefore a full screening assessment is required.
- 4.2 For full details of the River Wye's attributes which contribute to and define their integrity and vulnerable data see Appendix 1 of the Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group Initial Screening Report. The Initial Screening Report, February 2014, can be found in Appendix 3 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 Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group 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 or Wye Valley Woodlands SAC. Of all four options put forward the no NDP option was not considered viable for the Parish. The remaining two options both proposed growth however they would both be within the proportional growth targets of the Core strategy and are therefore unlikely to have a significant impact on the SACs.
- 4.4 As Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group progresses from options onto their NDP policies, the Plan will need to identify ways in which the least effect on the River Wye and Wye Valley Woodlands SAC could be achieved, alongside taking forward the preferred option from the consultation from the community. 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 Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 5.1 The Draft Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland NDP 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 introduces the Plan and its preparation and discusses the background of the village.
- 5.2 The NDP then details the vision for the Group Parish over the Plan period and ten objectives of how this will be achieved. The objectives cover the following topics:
- Proportionate housing growth**
 - Improve public transport, traffic, footpaths and cycleways**
 - Promote and encourage tourist and leisure facilities**
 - Support business growth**
 - Flood protection**
 - Protection of historic built and natural environment**
 - Protect and enhance community facilities**
- 5.3 The NDP also sets out 14 general policies on various topics based on the objective headings above and also for the village, these include:

Sustainable development for new housing
New homes in the countryside area
Public transport
Traffic and road safety
Footpaths and bridleways
Outdoor tourism, leisure and recreation
Employment growth and jobs
New development and flooding
Communication infrastructure
Protect enhance, landscape character
High quality design
Protect local heritage assets
Protect community facilities, shops and pubs
Promote vibrant and thriving community

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 Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Group 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 and Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.
- 7.2 The findings of the screening matrix can be found in the Screening Matrix in Appendix 2 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 when improving the transport infrastructure, 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 Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Plan (January 2017) policies were concluded to be likely to have a significant effect on the River Wye SAC. This is primarily because although the parish lies within the hydrological catchment of the River Wye, development is in line with the Core Strategy and existing safeguards exist within both plan policies. Based on assumptions and information contained within the Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Neighbourhood Plan, Herefordshire Core Strategy and the Pre-submission version and Proposed Main Modification Addendum B of the HRA for the Core Strategy all of the NDP policies were found to be unlikely to result in a significant likely effect on the River Wye SAC and Wye Valley Woodlands 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 The plan is very much criteria based, and does not allocate sites for development. However it allocates settlement boundaries for Hoarwithy and St Owens Cross.
- 8.4 Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) has stated for the Core Strategy that there is sufficient existing permitted headroom in the Sewerage Treatment works serving the Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland area to continue to treat the water from the amount of housing provided for in the Core Strategy policies. 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.
- 8.5 It is unlikely that the Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Plan will have any in-combination effects with any Plans from neighbouring parish councils as the level of growth proposed is the same as that proposed for the Housing Market Area in the Herefordshire Core Strategy and all of the proposed housing sites will be of a small scale.
- 8.6 It is therefore concluded that the Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Plan will not have a likely significant effect on the River Wye SAC or Wye Valley SAC.
- 8.7 Any further amendments to policies (post January 2017) will be rescreened if required and an addendum to this report will be produced.

Appendix 1

Ballingham Bolstone and Hentland Options

Option 1- Not prepare and NDP and let HC use the Core Strategy and Allocations Plan.
Option 2- Use a criteria based policy for allocating sites - as in the informal consultation draft.
Option 3-Allocate sites
Option 4- Define settlement boundaries as in the current version of the plan.

Appendix 2

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

Parish Council Name: Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group

NDP Title: Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group Plan

Date undertaken: January 2017

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- Not prepare and NDP and let HC use the Core Strategy and Allocations Plan.	No NDP to determine planning applications.	Criteria policies within the Core Strategy would guide further development. Specific policies and proposals for the parish would not exist.	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC and runs along the borders of all 3 parishes. Wye Valley Woodlands SAC, are 7.5 km away from group parish.	N/A	N/A
Option 2- Use a criteria based policy for allocating sites - as in the informal consultation draft.	Small scale proportionate growth where the location would be determined by a criteria based policy.	Uncertain as to the impact on the European sites as dependant on the location of the development.	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	Criteria based housing policy would require to include reference to mitigation measures to avoid any non-disturbance effects on	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core

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				<p>the River Wye via its catchment. Policies within the Core Strategy help to mitigate effect of development.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW. Policies within the Core Strategy help to mitigate effect of development.</p>	<p>Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at draft policy stage.</p>
Option 3-Allocate sites	Small scale proportionate growth on specific sites identified on a proposals map.	Greater degree of certainty over the impact of future development on the European sites, as the location of housing would be pre-determined and not left to market forces.	River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	<p>Specific environmental issues could be investigated during the site search and be positively addressed within the policy wording.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW.</p>	<p>No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at draft policy stage.</p>
Option 4- Define settlement boundaries as	Small scale proportionate growth	Any settlement boundary would need to be	River Wye (including	Additional criteria would be required when	No, development in line with the Local

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<p>in the current version of the plan.</p>	<p>within a defined settlement boundary area.</p>	<p>designated to ensure that sufficient capacity was included to permit the proportional growth requirements within Policy RA2 of the Core Strategy. Uncertain as to the impact on the European sites as dependant on the location of the development</p>	<p>the River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	<p>formulating the accompanying settlement boundary policy to ensure that no likely significant effects could occur.</p> <p>Policy would need to take account of the proportional growth requirements of the Core Strategy and potential headroom capacity at the local STW.</p>	<p>Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.</p> <p>Policy criteria should be included within the NDP which reflects this. Further assessments will be undertaken at draft policy stage.</p>

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

Parish Council Name: Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group Parish

NDP Title: Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group

Date undertaken: January 2017

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 objective/option/policy implemented. Could they have Likely Significant Effects (LSE) on European Sites? (Yes/No, with reasons)	European Sites potentially affected (Refer to Initial Screening)	Mitigation measures to be considered, as necessary, through redraft of objective/option/policy and to be considered as part of Appropriate Assessment	Could the policy have likely significant effects on European sites (taking mitigation into account?)
<i>Objective 1</i> - To encourage phased growth appropriate to the area's different settlements to maintain the area's vitality and community.	<p>Phased housing development</p> <p>Gradual increase in vehicle traffic.</p> <p>Gradual increase recreation activities.</p> <p>Increased demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment.</p>	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. NDP policy.	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p> <p>Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	Implementation of Core Strategy policy LD2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity, which aims to avoid adverse impacts on European sites from development including housing. Policy SD1: Sustainable design and Energy efficiency should help to mitigate potential impacts relating to non-physical disturbance.	No: development is in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should help avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.
<i>Objective 2</i> - To encourage improvements in public transport, road safety, traffic, footpaths and bridleways.	Promotion of road/ traffic safety	Unlikely that there will be any significant effects on the European Site. NDP policy.	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p> <p>Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	This objective helps to mitigate adverse effects on traffic caused by future housing development within BBH.	No: this objective itself will not lead to development, instead it relates to improving and mitigating adverse effects caused by additional housing

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					development.
<i>Objective 3 - To encourage outdoor tourist activity and improvements in recreation and leisure facilities.</i>	Promote outdoor and tourist activities within BBH. Increase in vehicle traffic. Increase in recreation activities.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None.	No, this is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the SACs, as this objective is seeking to improve leisure and tourist facilities.
<i>Objective 4 - To support business growth and access to job opportunities.</i>	Promotion of local jobs growth. Encourage local people to work closer to their work. Plan attracts employment opportunities in the rural area.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None	No. Further policy safeguard and criteria will be included within the policies of the plan.
<i>Objective 5 - To reduce the impact of flooding.</i>	This objective will protect development against flooding by minimising flood risk.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None as this objective is a mitigation measure in itself.	No, this objective is seeking to safeguard Development against flooding.
<i>Objective 6 - To improve communications infrastructure.</i>	Improvement of communications infrastructure. May improve broadband and mobile reception.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None.	No. This objective seeks to enhance communication networks throughout the parish.
<i>Objective 7 - To protect and enhance the area's landscape.</i>	Protect and enhance the existing natural environment, landscape.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley	None. This objective is a mitigation measure in itself.	No, this objective aims to protect the existing natural environment, enhancing landscape and views within the

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			Woodlands SAC.		group parish.
<i>Objective 8 - To conserve and enhance the area's natural heritage and historic assets.</i>	This objective will protect and help conserve historic assets identified in the plan.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None. This objective is a mitigation measure in itself.	No, this objective aims to protect the historic character, fabric and setting of historic assets within the conservation area.
<i>Objective 9 - To protect and enhance community facilities.</i>	Safeguard and maintain community facilities enhancing services and facilities within the plan period.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None.	No. This objective seeks to protect and enhance existing community facilities and services which it provides.
<i>Objective 10 - To address the needs of the area's different age groups.</i>	N/A	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None.	No. This objective does not relate to land use matter.
<i>Policy BBH1 – promoting new housing development in the settlements of Hoarwithy and St Owen's cross</i>	Policy to support sustainable development within Ballingham, Bolstone and Hentland Group. Promotion of achieving housing target. Increased vehicle traffic Increased demand for water abstraction and sewage treatment.	Depending on type, location of infrastructure. Physical damage of disturbance. Non-physical disturbance such as noise. Small scale housing development. Housing, infrastructure development Possible increase in recreation activities, vehicular movements and demand for water	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	Measures included within policy SD2 of the Core Strategy should help to mitigate potential impacts relating to non-physical disturbances. Policies SD3 and SD4 should help avoid adverse impacts in relation to hydrological regimes. Water quality in the River Wye SAC is also specifically addressed through the Nutrient Management Plan produced by Natural England and the	No. This policy may result in housing schemes. Depending on scale, nature and location of the development it may have a possibility of having a detrimental effect on the SACs. However there are sufficient policy safeguards within the NDP and Core Strategy to help avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects on the River Wye (inc

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		abstraction and treatment.		Environment Agency. Good practice construction techniques include noise suppression measures; hours of operation may help to mitigate potential adverse effects during construction.	River Lugg) SAC or Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.
<i>Policy BBH2</i> - new homes in the group's countryside area	Minimal housing development in countryside. Minimal increase in car usage.	Depending on type, location of infrastructure. Physical damage of disturbance. Non-physical disturbance such as noise.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	Good practice construction techniques include noise suppression measures; hours of operation may help to mitigate potential adverse effects during construction. Measures within Core Strategy policy SD1 should help to mitigate potential impacts relating to non-physical disturbances.	No. The scale and extent of potential development unlikely to have a significant impact on the SACs . There are sufficient policy safeguards within the Core Strategy and NDP to safeguard and where necessary mitigate detrimental impact caused from development towards the SACs.
<i>Policy BBH3</i> – Public transport	Improvement of public transport. Create sustainable transport links.	N/A	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	This policy may help mitigate impact on public transport infrastructure caused from new development.	No. This policy does not directly lead to development instead it aims for new development to improve existing transport infrastructure.
<i>Policy BBH4</i> – traffic and road safety	Promotion of sustainable methods of transport.	Any effects of additional transport will be mitigated	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	This policy aims to promote safe and sustainable methods of	No. This policy will ensure provision is made for needed

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	<p>Promotion of cycle and pedestrian provision.</p> <p>Promotion of access for all.</p> <p>Increase in walking and cycling.</p> <p>Decrease in traffic accidents.</p> <p>Development of transport infrastructure</p> <p>Traffic Calming measures</p> <p>Improvement of road safety</p>	with providing additional highway and transport measures.	Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	<p>transport.</p> <p>This policy has the potential to include other areas of sustainable transport such as car sharing schemes etc.</p>	<p>highway, footway and public transport provisions in line with new development.</p> <p>This policy could help to provide mitigation against the potential transport impact caused from new development and help promote a safer environment to travel in.</p>
<i>Policy BBH5 – footpaths and bridleways</i>	<p>Increase in walking, riding and cycling.</p> <p>Decrease in traffic accidents.</p> <p>Development of transport infrastructure</p> <p>Improvement of road safety</p>	None identified.	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p> <p>Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	This policy may help mitigate impact on public transport infrastructure caused from new development	No. This policy will ensure protection for footpaths and bridleways.
<i>Policy BBH6 - promoting outdoor tourism, leisure and recreation</i>	<p>Promote outdoor and tourist activities within BBH.</p> <p>Increase in vehicle traffic.</p> <p>Increase in recreation</p>	None identified.	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p> <p>Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	None.	No, this is unlikely to have a detrimental effect on the SACs, as this policy is seeking to improve and evolve leisure and tourist facilities.

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	activities.				
<i>Policy BBH7 - employment growth and jobs</i>	Growth of local jobs Increase in traffic Increase in water abstraction and sewage treatment	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	Sufficient safeguards within the Core Strategy will help mitigate detrimental impact caused from business growth.	No. It is unlikely that this policy will have a detrimental impact on the SACs. This will promote employment growth and jobs within BBH.
<i>Policy BBH8 - New development and flooding</i>	Seeks to reduce impacts of flooding within the parish.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	This policy should help to mitigate potential adverse effects of future development on designated areas by ensuring that development happens in sustainable non-flood risk locations.	No, the policy itself will not lead to development; instead it relates to the criteria used for permitting development in suitable locations. The policy is aiming to reduce development in flood risk areas thus reducing the impact on the water environment.
<i>Policy BBH9 - new development to improve communications infrastructure</i>	Improvement to communications infrastructure.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None.	No, development in line with the Local Plan (Core Strategy) and the policy safeguards which exist within the Core Strategy should avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects.

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<i>Policy BBH10 - protecting and enhancing landscape character</i>	Safeguard existing landscape against inappropriate development. Encouragement of sustainable development which preserves and protects the landscape, environment and habitats.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None. This policy acts as a mitigation measure to ensure developments to be fitting for its context and ensures protection to the exiting landscape.	No. This policy ensures existing landscape is protected against inappropriate development. There are sufficient policy safeguards within the NDP and Core Strategy to help avoid or mitigate any likely significant effects on the SACs.
<i>Policy BBH11 – high quality design</i>	Policy to support sustainable development within BBH. Promote high standard of building design.	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None. This policy acts as a mitigation measure to ensure development to be fitting for its context and to promote sustainable methods of energy use and waste disposal.	No. This policy ensures all development strives to be sustainable in terms of setting, building design, construction and operation.
<i>Policy BBH12 – Protecting local heritage assets</i>	Safeguard historic assets Ensure development is suited to external context	None identified.	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.	None. This policy acts as a mitigation measure to ensure development to be fitting for its historic context.	No, as the policy merely seeks to ensure that greater checks and balances are placed on proposals that directly affect heritage assets, including those which are not subject to any formal designation, at the planning application stage.
<i>Policy BBH13 – protecting community facilities, shops and pubs</i>	Community facility development.	Increase of vehicular movement and demand for water abstraction and	River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC	Improved water efficiency measures, metering and addressing leakages in the supply	No, although this policy could result in the re development of new community

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	<p>Community benefit.</p> <p>Increase in recreation and community events.</p> <p>Support and upkeep of existing local community facilities.</p> <p>Promote new development of community facilities.</p> <p>Increase in vehicular movements.</p>	<p>treatment.</p> <p>Physical damage of disturbance on a localised scale.</p> <p>Non-physical disturbance such as noise.</p>	<p>Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	<p>may help to mitigate any additional pressures on the water supply as a result of new development. Measures within Policy SD1 of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) should help to mitigate potential impacts relating to non-physical disturbances</p>	<p>facilities or the loss of existing provision to new uses, which depending on location could have potential effect on the SACz.</p>
<p><i>Policy BBH14 – a vibrant and thriving community</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>River Wye (including River Lugg) SAC</p> <p>Wye Valley Woodlands SAC.</p>	<p>None.</p>	<p>No. This objective does not relate to land use matter.</p>

Appendix 3

**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:	Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Neighbourhood Area
Parish Council:	Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group Parish Council
Neighbourhood Area Designation Date:	14/04/2014

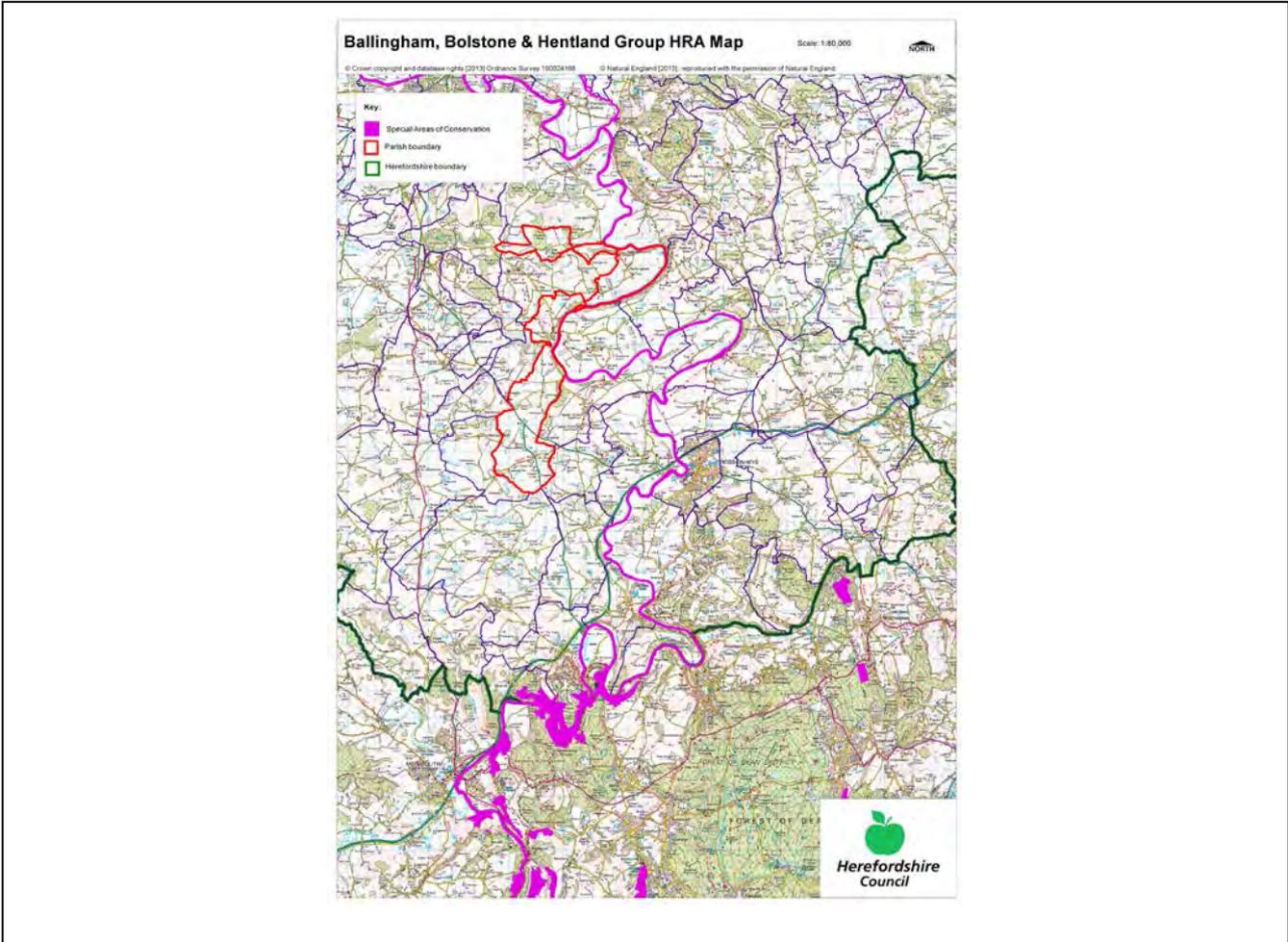
Introduction

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?	Y	The River Wye SAC runs along the borders of all 3 Parishes.
Is the Neighbourhood Area in the hydrological catchment of the River Wye (including the River Lugg) SAC?	Y	The Group Parish is within the hydrological catchment of the River Wye.
If yes above, does the Neighbourhood Area have mains drainage to deal with foul sewage?	Y	There is mains drainage in St Owens Cross.

Downton Gorge SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of Downton Gorge SAC?	N	Downton Gorge is 41.1km away from the Group 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 Group Parish.
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Usk Bat Sites SAC:

Is the Neighbourhood Area within 10km of the SAC boundary?	N	Usk Bat Sites are 34.6km away from the Group 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 11.4km away from the Group 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?	Y	Wye Valley Woodlands are 7.5km away from the Group Parish.
--	---	--

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 Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group 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

Wye Valley Woodlands 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 Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group Neighbourhood Area and would need to be taken into account within a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition, the NDP will also need to consider the other SEA topics set out in Guidance Note 9a to ensure that the plan does not cause adverse impacts.

SEA features	Total	Explanation	SEA required
Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA)	0	There are no AQMAs within the Group Parish	N
Ancient Woodland	21	Nether Wood (border); Lady Coppice (border); Fox Wood (border); Ballis Wood (border); Trilloes Court Wood; Upper Bolstone Wood; Lower Bolstone Wood; Widows Wood (border); Brick Kiln Wood (border); 1 unlabelled site at Kidley Hill; 1 unlabelled site at Ballingham Hill; Carey & Capler Woods (border); Armastone Wood (border); Weaven Wood; Gwatkins Grove; Elvaston Wood (border); Riggs Wood (border); Pengethley Grove (border); Tuft Wood; 1 x unlabelled site between Dason Court and Harewood End Public House; Lower Heath Wood	Y
Areas of Archaeological Interest (AAI)	0	There are no AAIs within the Group Parish	N
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)	1	Wye Valley AONB runs through part of the Group Parish	Y
Conservation Areas	1	Hoarwithy	Y
European Sites (SAC)	1	River Wye	Y
Flood Areas/Zones		Flood Zones follow the River Wye	Y
Listed Buildings	Numerous	There are numerous Listed Buildings throughout the Group Parish	Y
Local Sites (SWS/SINCS/RIGS)	25 (SWS) 1 (RIGS)	SWS: Athelstans and Rough Hill Woods & The Crickets (border); Ballis Wood (border); Trilloes Court Wood; Upper Bolstone Wood & The Belt; Lower Bolstone Wood; Woodlands on Aconbury Hill (border); Williams Wood (border); Brick Kiln Wood (border); Ponds at Holme Lacy (border); River Wye; Kidley Hill Wood; Ballingham Wood; Woods along the Wye from Capler Camp (border); Ballingham Railway Tunnel; Fields north of Carey; Fawley Railway Tunnel (border); Although Wood; Margin of Wriggle Brook near Tresseck; redbrook Meadow, Gwatkins grove & Grandoos Coppice (border); Riggs Wood (border); Castle Meadow Wood (border); Pengethley Grove (border); The Moors; Upper Heath & Lower Heath Woods (border); Wilson Farm	Y

		Ponds (border)	
Long distance footpaths/trails	1	Herefordshire Trail	Y
Mineral Reserves	0	There are no Minerals Reserve Sites within the Group Parish	N
National Nature Reserve (NNR)	0	There are no NNRs within the Group Parish	N
Registered & Unregistered Parks and Gardens	1 Registered 7 Unregistered	Registered: Holme Lacy (border) Unregistered: Harewood Park (border); Pengethley Park; Caradoc Court (border); Pennoxstone (border); Armastone (border); Fawley Court (border); Brockhampton, by Ross (border)	Y
Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM)	5	Moated site, Trilloes Court Wood; Capler Camp (border); Churchyard cross at St Davids churchyard (border); Caple Tump, a motte castle 175m south west of Caple Court (border); Churchyard cross at St Dubricius' churchyard	Y
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	5	River Wye (Unfavourable Recovering); Capler Wood (Favourable) (border); Birch Wood (Favourable) (border); Lea & Pagets Wood (Favourable (part) Unfavourable recovering (part) Unfavourable Declining Part (part) (border)); Common Hill (Favourable (part) Unfavourable Recovering (part) Unfavourable Declining (part)) (border)	Y

Decision Notification:

The initial screening highlights that the Neighbourhood Development Plan for the Ballingham, Bolstone & Hentland Group Neighbourhood Area:

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

Assessment date: 11/02/2014

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

