

## **Royal Wootton Bassett Draft Neighbourhood Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening**

### 1. Screening Methodology

Each element of the draft plan<sup>1</sup> has been categorised against the screening criteria developed on behalf of, and endorsed by Natural England<sup>2</sup>. This approach is advised to help provide a clear audit trail for the assessment of local planning documents (which may be applied to neighbourhood plans), and if necessary identify the need for the policies to be removed / amended or new policies added to be certain that the plan will not have a significant negative effect on a European site.

The criteria used were as follows:

- Category A1: The policy will not itself lead to development e.g. because it relates to design or other qualitative criteria for development;
- Category A2: The policy is intended to protect the natural environment;
- Category A3: The policy is intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment;
- Category A4: The policy would positively steer development away from European sites and associated sensitive areas;
- Category A5: The policy would have no effect because no development could occur through the policy itself, the development being implemented through later policies in the same plan, which are more specific and therefore more appropriate to assess for their effects on European Sites and associated sensitive areas.
- Category B – no significant effect;
- Category C – likely significant effect alone; and
- Category D – Likely significant effects in combination.

The effect of each draft policy has been considered both individually, and in combination. The effects of the whole plan have also been considered in combination with the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy.

### 2. Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA

Wiltshire Core strategy HRA screened in the following potential effects of development at in the Royal Wootton Bassett and Cricklade Community Area upon the Natura 2000 network<sup>3</sup>:

#### *Hydrology / Hydrogeology*

- Kennet and Lambourne Floodplain SAC  
Hackpen Hill SAC
- Kennet Alderwoods SAC
- River Lambourne SAC
- Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC
- Rodborough Common SAC

---

<sup>1</sup> Royal Wootton Bassett Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan (December 2016)

<sup>2</sup> David Tyldesley Associates (2009) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment of Local Development Documents* (Revised Draft Guidance)

<sup>3</sup> Wiltshire Core Strategy: Assessment under the Habitats Regulations, Appendix A. (March 2013)

- North Meadows and Clattinger Farm SAC

*Nitrogen Deposition*

- Porton Down SPA
- 
- Salisbury Plain SAC / SPA
- Southampton Water SPA
- Clattinger Farm SAC
- River Avon SAC
- Rodborough Common SAC
- Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC

Draft policies within the draft Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan have been screened against each of the above potential impacts, for each Natura 2000 site.

3. Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan

The draft Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan includes draft policies to address the following policy objectives:

- Services, Facilities and Retailing (Section 3)
- Development and Housing (Section 4)
- Transport (Section 5)

All parts of the plan have been screened for potential impacts upon the Natura 2000 network, as set out in Section 4.

4. Initial Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment of the Draft Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan

a. Screening assessment of individual policies

A / B (Green) – Screened out

C / D (Red) – Screened in

Policy Area	Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
Services, Retailing and Infrastructure	Policy 1: Services and Facilities	B	
	Policy 2: Convenience and Comparison Retail	A1	
	Policy 3: Town Centre Uses	A1	
	Policy 4: Community Infrastructure	A5	
	Policy 5: Town Park and Row de Dow	A3	
	Policy 6: Integrated Community Facilities	B	
Development and Housing	Policy 7: Restricted / Infill Development	A1	
	Policy 8: High Quality Mixed Development	A1	
	Policy 9: Design	A1	
	Policy 10: Land off Maple Drive	B	
	Policy 11: Employment Land	B	

Policy Area	Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
	Policy 12: Visitor Accommodation & Facilities	B	
	Policy 13: Strategic Open Space	A3	
Transport	Policy 14: Railway Station	B	
	Policy 15: Road safety, traffic and transport	A1	
	Policy 16: Pedestrian / cycleways	A1	

- b. Assessment of all elements of the plan 'in combination'
  - The draft policies would not have any in combination effects
- c. Assessment of the effects of the plan as a whole, in combination with Wiltshire Core Strategy
  - The plan would not have any in combination effects with the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Swindon Core Strategy

5. Conclusion

The draft policies do allocate one small site for development and largely provide qualitative criteria for development focused on protecting the local environment and guiding the design of new housing, and would therefore have no likely significant effects upon Natura 2000.

It can therefore be concluded that the draft Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan would have no likely significant effects upon the Natura 2000 network alone or in combination, and no appropriate assessment is considered necessary by Wiltshire Council as competent authority.

**Please note that HRA is an iterative process and future iterations of the plan should also be screened if the policies change significantly.**

Assessment completed by [REDACTED] Senior Ecologist, Wiltshire Council 16/2/2017