

2.0 The Screening Process

- 2.1 This screening note builds upon the HRA that was carried out of the Phase II Revision by Treweek Environmental Consultants. In the Treweek report all those sites that were considered to be impacted upon by the Phase II Revision were identified. Equally those sites that were considered to be unaffected were also listed.
- 2.2 The increased housing numbers constitute an additional impact over and above that which was identified for the Phase II Revision. BSG has therefore used the original screening report as a basis for this screening process to ensure a consistent approach.
- 2.3 The purpose of the Screening stage is to identify 'Likely Significant Effects' (LSEs) on any European sites that might be adversely affected by the nine initial options being put forward to address the governments concerns.
- 2.4 The aim is to identify:
- Those European sites that are not likely to be affected (meaning that no further assessment is required);
 - Sites where LSEs are likely and where the next Stage of a full Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required.
- 2.5 The Screening stage entails the collection and analysis of information relating to:
- All European sites within the West Midlands and also those sites outside the immediate 'footprint' of the plan, which could be subject to indirect effects;
 - RSS Phase Two revision policies and proposals;
 - Information on other plans and projects which might contribute to in-combination effects, for example the neighbouring Regional Spatial Strategies.
- 2.6 In addition to the information that was provided from the original Treweek report BSG also gained new data from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC) website (www.jncc.gov.uk). This provided up to date information on the European sites and their conservation objectives. Other sources of literature were also consulted for example data was obtained from the Environment Agency. In addition, BSG drew upon the consultations previously held with the statutory bodies and other interest parties both on an individual basis and at a workshop, held in July 2007, that was organised by the Regional Planning Bodies' consultant to consider the new housing provision.
- 2.7 Following the data collation and consultation BSG set out to update the impact tables that were presented in the Treweek report. For example, information on the conservation objectives for some sites were updated and where some new designations were introduced. BSG then carried out a comparative analysis of the impacts identified in the HRA of the Phase II revisions to see how the proposed housing options might affect the impact identified. In the majority of cases this involved revisiting the assessment and evaluating how the increased housing levels might impact upon the site. In the majority of cases the impacts concentrated on changes in demands for water resource, impacts of water quality, changes in air pollution and impacts of increased recreation pressure. The impact tables were modified with additional columns to show the original impact that was identified for the Phase II Revisions; including a column explaining how the additional housing may compound those impacts and a column showing the overall assessment of the significant of that impact. The matrices presented in Appendix 3 summarise the results of the analysis and the consultation process. The following section provides a summary of the main findings.