

3.0 Screening Results

- 3.1 The results of the screening findings are summarised in the following tables. The detailed screening assessment for each site can be found in Appendix 3.
- 3.2 Table 1 summarises those sites which were considered for assessment, for which it has been concluded that it is not likely that there will be any likely significant effect (LSE) upon the site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. In each case the reason for filtering out the site at this stage is summarised.
- 3.3 Table 2 summarises those sites for which it has been concluded that a likely significant effect arising from the new housing options cannot be ruled out at this stage, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. In some cases it was felt that more information was required and therefore, these sites progress onto the full Appropriate Assessment of Stage 2. Again for each site the reasons for progression to Stage 2 are stated.

Table 1

European Site	Reason for screening out at this stage
Berwyn and South Clwyd Mountains SAC	Although the site is over its critical load for Nitrogen and acid deposition, it is some distance from the West Midlands and the prevailing winds are generally from the West. This makes it unlikely that growth in the West Midlands would have a direct effect on the site.
Bredon Hill SAC	In the draft screening report it was considered that increases in background levels of air pollution could be a significant issue and progression to Stage 2 was recommended. Following the consultation on the screening Natural England reported that it did not consider that the interest of the site (Violet click-beetle <i>Limoniscus violaceus</i>) was sensitive to changes in air quality and that no AA was necessary for this site. This site was originally subjected to a full AA for the Phase II revision, but no adverse impact on the integrity of the site was identified.
Dee Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar	The Dee Estuary is not currently affected by water abstractions taking place in the north Shropshire area. Future licensing would not permit adverse effects on this SAC. No LSE expected. This site was not included in the screening for the Phase II revisions.
Dixton Wood SAC	In the draft screening report it was considered that diffuse air pollution (specifically nitrogen deposition) may be having an adverse effect on achievement of conservation objectives and that this site should progress to Stage 2. Following the consultation on the screening Natural England reported that it did not consider that the interest of the site was sensitive to changes in air quality and that no AA was necessary for this site. This site was originally subjected to a full AA for the Phase II revision where it could not be concluded that an adverse impact upon the integrity of the site could be ruled out, because of the potential impacts on air pollution.
Ensors Pool SAC	The site was screened out, because the site's water supply is from rainwater or spring-water and is therefore, unlikely to be affected by housing proposals and associated abstraction. Most issues affecting this site require local management solutions deliverable at site level, or through the 'Core Strategy', which should address the issue of local in-fill development on land in the vicinity.
Lyppard Grange Ponds SAC	Recreational disturbance is not thought likely to represent a threat to newt numbers, or their ability to use terrestrial habitat surrounding the pools.

Motley Meadows SAC	No significant effects identified.
Walmore Common SPA and Ramsar	No significant effects identified.
Rostherne Mere SPA	No significant effects identified. The site is a considerable distance from the regional boundary (25km) and is considered sufficiently far away for increased recreational use to be unlikely as a result of development in the RSS.

Table 1: Sites for which no Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) are identified

Table 2

European site	Reason for progression to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Brown Moss SAC	Possible impacts on water quality, if development occurs in the vicinity of the site and levels of polluted surface water run-off increase. This is an additional impact to that identified in the Phase II Revision HRA
Cannock Chase SAC	Those parts of Cannock Chase SAC within 200 m of the A34, A513 or A460 Trunk Roads may be exposed to increased levels of deposition of atmospheric pollutants, causing changes to the plant species composition of the vegetation communities for which the site is designated. There are also possible direct effects from traffic due to increased recreational use of the site associated with an expanding local population. A future consequence of this could be the need for additional supporting infrastructure or facilities which could potentially require land-take within or near Cannock Chase SAC. Another effect of increased recreational use could be impacts on water quality and localised eutrophication. These effects could be further exacerbated by the in-combination effects of the Visitor Economy Strategy. Water abstraction is an issue currently under investigation by the Environment Agency.
Cannock Extension Canal SAC	Levels of recreational use of the Cannock Extension Canal are expected to go up as a result of policies in the RSS, the Regional Housing Strategy and the Visitor Economy Strategy. Significant effects are possible if increase recreation translates into increases in boat traffic and associated physical disturbance. Run-off from the A5 Trunk Road may also increase if traffic levels go up, exacerbating an existing water quality problem. Increased levels of deposition of atmospheric pollutants are also likely, but these are not expected to translate into significant changes in water chemistry.
Downtown Gorge SAC	This site also receives nitrogen and acid deposition above its critical load. RSS growth proposals and additional housing options may exacerbate this problem if it contributes to increase in levels of Nitrous oxides emissions in future.
Fenn's, Wixhall, Bettisfield, Wem and Cadney Mosses SAC	Possible effects associated with increased recreational use, in combination with Shropshire Economic Development Strategy and Visitor Economy Strategy. Increased recreational use and the need for supporting facilities could exacerbate existing water quality issues. This site also receives nitrogen and acid deposition above its critical load. RSS growth proposals may exacerbate this problem if it contributes to increase in levels of nitrous oxides emissions in future.

European site	Reason for progression to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Fens Pool SAC	<p>The integrity of the site relies on supporting habitat around the site which lies currently outside the designated site boundaries. The site currently has little buffer from surrounding development and is therefore vulnerable to any further land take of the supporting habitat, changes in the use of this land, or other impacts on the qualifying species outside the site boundaries. Consistent with a precautionary approach, the supporting habitat surrounding the site needs to be protected to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Fens Pool SAC. This might include action to regulate recreational use of the site and its surroundings.</p>
Pasturefields Salt Marsh SAC	<p>This site is periodically affected by flood water from River Trent which has high sewage loadings and additional loadings from surface water runoff. This problem could be exacerbated by housing development upstream. There could be possible impacts associated with water abstraction in future if further water is sourced from the River Trent.</p>
Peak District Dales SAC	<p>Possible significant effects on the site's integrity could occur with increased recreational use and generally increasing levels of air pollution as a result of increased development. The site currently receives nitrogen and acid deposition above critical load. RSS growth proposals may exacerbate this problem if they contribute to an increase in levels of nitrous oxides emissions from transport, business and the domestic sector in future.</p> <p>It is also possible that development may affect land use in the vicinity of rivers and so increase polluted surface water run-off could occur unless Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are used.</p> <p>Increased abstractions arising from development under the RSS are likely within the local water resource zones but the site is largely rainwater-fed, therefore increased abstraction under the RSS is unlikely to affect the site provided that there are no Water Transfer schemes operating from infrastructure fed from this area.</p>
River Clun SAC	<p>Water quality/supply risks. Pearl mussels rely on salmonid migration and therefore, adequate flow is crucial in the River Severn and River Clun. It is possible that future abstraction of surface and groundwater may affect water levels at the site. However, review of consents demonstrated no impact from current abstraction and if there was an increase applied for and an effect recorded, the permission would not be granted. Review of consents (RoC) clearly demonstrated that the River Clun does have high levels of phosphate, but these are largely due to diffuse sources. The relatively limited number of point sources will be dealt with via Review of Consents and the AMP (Asset Management Programme) process. Water quality in the River Clun is generally improving and will continue to improve via the AMP process. Also there are some issues with phosphate loadings due to inadequate water treatment.</p>
River Dee and Bala Lake SAC	<p>Possible that future abstraction of surface and groundwater may affect water levels at the site. Possible increased mortality to otters from increased road traffic.</p>
River Mease SAC	<p>There is considerable pressure on water resources in the Region and the additional proposed housing could exacerbate this. Confirmed by Environment Agency during consultation. Extending water supply networks would have implications for the site's conservation objectives.</p> <p>There is potential for the RSS to exacerbate existing problems with competition for water supply. A review of consents as part of Phase 2 Revision has confirmed risks from future abstraction. High levels of household growth could have a significant effect if abstraction is needed from the river. Risk to site integrity is possible. However, any new abstraction would only be allowed</p>

European site	Reason for progression to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
	<p>if water were available after the RoC process is completed.</p> <p>Water availability for any additional development needs to be explored in detail.</p> <p>Diffuse pollution and excessive sedimentation related to agricultural land use as well as housing and economic growth are a current problem: there are problems with phosphate levels based on current consented limits. It is therefore, also necessary to explore water quality issues further. May need to review RSS in terms of SUDSs, waste-water treatment generally and levels of surface water run-off.</p> <p>Possible increased mortality to otters from increased road traffic.</p>
River Usk SAC	<p>Any increase in housing in Herefordshire could increase the demand on Welsh Water for additional water supplies. Depending on how Welsh Water meets the demand for additional water will determine whether there would be any requirement for abstraction from the Usk catchment.</p> <p>Risk to site integrity is possible. However, any new abstraction would only be allowed if water were available after the RoC process is completed.</p> <p>The river Usk was not included in the Phase II Revision HRA, however at CCW's request the site was included at this screening stage.</p>
River Wye SAC	<p>It is possible that future abstraction of surface and groundwater may affect water levels at the site. Land use changes associated with the RSS and other plans could affect water quality and supply and there is an issue with water quality on this site based on current consented limits. Water abstraction is a significant issue as well as water quality problems associated with sewage discharges. There may also be impacts arising from increased levels of recreational use and disturbance.</p>
Severn Estuary cSAC	<p>The Severn system is under considerable pressure for water supply and is under investigation as part of the Habitats Directive. Increased abstraction, including that arising from the RSS, has the potential to affect the qualifying features of the Severn Estuary SAC due to the current and future tension between providing water supply for new housing and maintaining minimum flows. Water quality impacts are also possible due to increasing surface water run-off, the inadequacy of water treatment infrastructure and the possibility of reduced flow concentrating pollutants in the watercourse.</p>
South Pennine Moors SAC	<p>The site currently receives Nitrogen and acid deposition above critical load. The growth proposals may exacerbate this problem if they contribute to an increase in levels of nitrous oxides emissions from transport, business and domestic sector. The additional housing options may also contribute to increased recreational pressure alone and in combination with other plans, and may lead to land use changes from new housing development near the site.</p>
West Midlands Mosses SAC	<p>Increased housing development is likely to create water deficit problems, but it is not currently known to what extent this would affect sites. The site is also over its critical load for Nitrogen and acid pollution.</p>
Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Bat Sites SAC	<p>The site should be assessed in Stage 2 due to possible implications of land use change within foraging areas, particularly for greater horseshoe bats. The areas prioritised for development are some distance away but associated infrastructure, including transport links, could also have an impact, as well as increased recreational disturbance.</p>

European site	Reason for progression to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment
Wye Valley Woodlands SAC	<p>The site currently receives Nitrogen deposition above critical load. The RSS growth proposals may exacerbate problem if they contribute to an increase in levels of NOx emissions from transport, business and domestic sector.</p> <p>There are possible in-combination effects on land use within foraging areas for bats, though the areas prioritised for development are some distance away.</p>
Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase I) SPA	<p>Acid and nitrogen depositions currently exceed the critical limits for the site. Further background increases in the levels of nitrogen oxides emitted from motor vehicles, industrial and domestic combustion processes may have a likely significant effect. There is also the potential for effects arising from increased recreational pressure. The Environment Agency concluded no impact from the existing abstraction licences. Likely effects of new abstractions would depend on the location and depth of boreholes and the rates of abstraction: full impact and appropriate assessment would be required for any new application.</p>
Severn Estuary SPA	<p>Household and economic growth has the potential to affect the qualifying features of the Severn Estuary SPA due to the current and future tension between providing water supply for new housing and maintaining minimum flows. Water supply/qualities issues need to be investigated further. Also potential issue with water quality and with effects on water quality caused by the increasing demand for water supply (concentration of pollutants due to lower flows). This site is currently under investigation as part of the Habitats Directive.</p>
South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA	<p>Acid and Nitrogen depositions currently exceed the critical limits for the site. Further background increases in the levels of nitrous oxides emitted from motor vehicles, industrial and domestic combustion processes may have a likely significant effect. There is the potential for increased disturbance driven by increased tourism and recreational use arising from the RSS alone and in combination with other plans and strategies.</p>
Humber Flats, Marshes and Coast (Phase 2) SPA	<p>Severn Trent's Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) predicts a deficit in water for the East Midlands Water Resource Zone (WRZ) and therefore, new schemes will be suggested. As a consequence, increased housing would put further demands to further increase abstraction, which depending on where this would be undertaken, could have the potential to effect the River Trent and therefore the Humber.</p>
Humber Estuary SAC and Ramsar	<p>Severn Trent's WRMP predicts a deficit in water for the East Midlands WRZ and therefore, new schemes will be suggested. Therefore, increased housing would put further demands to further increase abstraction, which depending on where this would be undertaken could have the potential to affect the River Trent and therefore the Humber.</p>
Midlands Meres and Mosses Phase I Ramsar	<p>The sites are likely to be affected by different pressures depending on their location. Some may be liable to significant effects. Risks are possible from water quality and supply issues, recreational pressures, land take and invasive species.</p>
Midlands Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar	<p>The sites are likely to be affected by different pressures depending on their location. Some may be liable to significant effects. Risks are possible from water quality and supply issues, recreational pressures, land take and invasive species.</p>
Severn Estuary Ramsar	<p>The Severn system is under considerable pressure for water supply. Increasing levels of development could affect water quality in the Severn and the estuary and has the potential to adversely affect the Ramsar site, due to the current and future tension between providing water supply for new housing and maintaining minimum flows. There are also possible in-combination effects driven by increased tourism and recreational use. This site is currently under investigation as part of the Habitats Directive.</p>

Table 2: Sites likely to be significantly affected